BING

APRIL 1992

100th Edition

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

Founded 1950

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Hon Secretary & Treasurer	MICHAEL CRAMPTON	19 Carrholm Crescent Chapel Allerton Leeds LS7 2NL Tel: 0532 689556
Magazine Editor	KEN CROSSLAND	9 Arden Drive Dorridge Solihull B93 8LP Tel: 0564 730108
Asst. Editor	MALCOLM MACFARLANE	16 Bracey Rise West Bridgford Nottingham NG2 7AX Tel: 0602 233584
Publishing & Distribution	JOHN JOYCE	Ravenswood House Chowdene Bank Low Fell Gateshead NE9 6JP Tel: 091 487 8761
U.S. Representative	F.B. (Wig) WIGGINS	5608 North 34th St. Arlington, Virginia 22207 U.S.A. (703) 241-5608
Australian Representative	DAVID CURRINGTON	1 Ivy Street Greenacre, NSW Australia 2190
Records	DEREK PARKES	66 Firs Road Firsdown Salisbury SP5 1SW Tel: 0980 862688
Films	KEITH PARKINSON	'Meadowcroft' Houghtons Lane Eccleston St. Helens WA10 5LD Tel: 0744 22248
Radio and TV	LIONEL PAIRPOINT	86 Ellesmere Avenue Mill Hill London NW7 3HD
Photographs	RON BOSLEY	10 Fountains Avenue Simonstone Near Burnley Lancashire BB12 7PY Tel: 0282 79924

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

8 May 1992 — The Swallow Hotel, Gateshead. An evening of records, films, tapes and friendship, with a three course meal thrown in. Tickets available at £8.00 from John Joyce (address on Inside Front Cover) or Phil Morgan, 5 Sanderson Road, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 2DR (Tel: 091 281 3765). Overnight accommodation can be arranged at a cost of £27.50 in Twin Bedded Room. Single Room Supplement £7.50.

also

27th ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

MANSION HOUSE, ROUNDHAY PARK, LEEDS

SUNDAY OCTOBER 4th 1992 — 3 p.m. to 10 p.m.

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Membership renewals fall due on 1 January on each year, and should be sent, together with remittance to Michael Crampton at the address shown above. Subscription rates effective 1 January 1992 are:

UK	£7.00 per annum
Europe, inc Eire	£8.00 per annum
USA & Canada	$20 per annum
Australia, New Zealand & South America	£11.50 per annum

All remittances should be paid in £ sterling, payable to "Michael Crampton — ICC" with the exception of U.S. members who should send their remittance in U.S. dollars to F. Wiggins and Australian members who shall pay David Currington. For addresses see page 1.
All articles for inclusion in the magazine should be sent to Ken Crossland.
Readers' letters and material for inclusion in Trading Post should be sent to Malcolm Macfarlane.
Any other correspondence concerning membership or other aspects of club affairs should be sent to Michael Crampton.

BING is the official journal of the International Crosby Circle and is published in April, August and December of each year.

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ICC. All original material c ICC 1992.

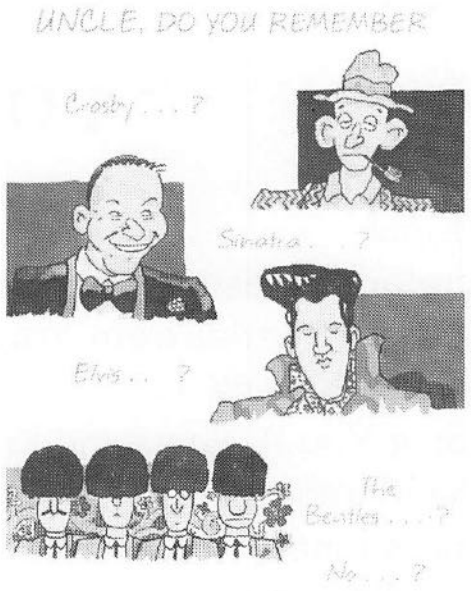
Cover photo courtesy Ron Bosley and Ragnar Uppman.
Rear cover courtesy Don Halzelden

EDITORIAL

The most amazing thing about anniversaries it seems, is the speed with which they come around. It seems only yesterday that Michael Crampton, John Joyce, Malcolm Macfarlane, Keith Parkinson and myself were sitting down in a side room at the Mansion House in Leeds and talking about the future of the ICC and BING. Not just **about** the future, but **was** there a future? The toil of producing BING and THE GOLDEN YEARS, virtually by hand, had found an unwelcome ally in Old Father Time and forced Reg Bristo to finally relinquish the task. Club funds were virtually non-existent, membership declining, and more to the point, there was no prospect of producing regular magazines with the obsolete technology of the 1960s, which was the only asset that the Club had. That was 30 months ago. Now we find ourselves celebrating BING 100 with an issue which is not only on a par, in terms of production, with that of any other comparable society, but also packed with new and original work on Bing's career. Some members would of course like to see four magazines a year and perhaps would like a more homely (maybe even hand produced) style. Hopefully though, all will agree that we have a magazine that we can be proud of, and is a long way from the dark days and nights of late 1989.

Inevitably, an anniversary is also a time for looking back. Malcolm Macfarlane has dug into BINGs 1-99 and come up with two pieces that are particularly worthy of reprint. I have also looked back at the first copy I received — no. 11 from August 1968. The thing about that issue which strikes one, looking back, is the depth of original material. In it, you will find articles by Fred Reynolds and Reg Bristo, news information from Fred Romary (who makes a welcome return in this issue's "Letters" pages) and Jean-Paul Frereault from Canada, contributions from Bert Day and John Bassett and a particularly interesting letter from the late Alf Farrow of Hull. I subsequently got to know Alf quite well through the annual gatherings at Leeds. One thing that was always interesting to talk about with Alf, and his colleague from Humberside, Vic Gilmore, was their recollections of the **first** British Crosby club, "The Bing Crosby Friendship Club". The club was formed in the mid-30s and published a regular newsletter called "Crosby Comment". Not many copies of this have survived, and to Alf's regret, all his papers associated with the club were lost in the war.

It was by one of those strange quirks of fate and coincidence however that, just as I was beginning work on this issue, what should drop through the letterbox but a copy of "Crosby Comment" from 1936. And it came from a most unlikely source — the personal scrapbooks of Denny Dennis, "Britain's Bing Crosby" and more appropriately, Roy Fox's famous vocalist. I had been pleased to see an announcement of the formation of a Denny Dennis Music Society and I contacted the secretary, Mike Carey to establish some links between it and the ICC. Mike kindly agreed to provide an article on Denny and Bing, which you'll find later in this issue, but in mentioning it to Denny (who lives in retirement in the Lake District), Denny came up with the newsletter. Denny's link with "Crosby Comment" was that it included a letter from



Happy Birthday — BING 100

him about Bing — "Crosby to me is the beginning and the end of all crooning. His versatility is amazing. Whilst he can 'sing you to sleep with a love song', he can just as well 'shine away your blues'. And anything that comes in between these two, he just "Crosbies" away in his own inimitable style."

Speaking of inimitable style, I for one was delighted by the appearance of the "Magic of Bing Crosby" video. I've always been of the view that Bing's work in the late 50s, 60s and early 70s has been greatly under-valued, particularly by Crosby enthusiasts. Indeed, I found my early days with the ICC quite frustrating as people raptured about the voice of (then) 30 years ago, but decried Bing's then contemporary output. I've also felt however that Bing's television work — much of which has never been seen in the UK — contained some of his most original and inventive work. The video itself contains evidence of this with the "June In January" duet and the splendid "Jingle Bells" number. I can only commend it to everyone and hope that volume two gives more of the same.

We deal with the video at some length in the pages that follow, happily with a return to these pages by Bert Bishop, who was a regular some years ago. The theme of television is also well served by Malcolm Macfarlane's chronicling of Bing's years at the Hollywood Palace. I think I am right in saying that Malcolm's listing is wholly originally and another "first" for BING. And there's more to come in the form of a complete listing of **all** of Bing's performances on TV.

In between these features, we have our usual regulars, to whom I must again add my thanks. I should also add a word of apology to those who have submitted material which, because of pressures of space even in an expanded issue such as this, have had to be left out — at least for now.

So we hope that you will enjoy BING 100 — and that someone will tuck at least one away in a file. You never know who might be looking for a copy in 50 years time!

Ken Crossland

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

Greetings to all members in this our 100th edition of BING, issue one having been sent out to members 27 years ago on the 25th January 1965.

During the intervening years members will have enjoyed the direction given to the journal by our late and beloved secretaries **Frank Murphy** and **Reg Bristo**, the former having founded the ICC in 1965 and the latter having continued and expanded on the highly successful formula which made the ICC a persuasively good influence in the world of Crosbyana. BING 100 is a tribute to the enthusiasm and dedication which both gentlemen displayed during their long tenure of office with the International Crosby Circle and your present management team hope to maintain their proud tradition.

April is a convenient time to 'review' the previous years achievements and this year, no less than last, I believe we have much to be proud of. The magazine has maintained a high standard of presentation and the content has been original and entertaining and once again I would like to commend my fellow members of the team for dedicated work in producing BING 97 through to BING 99.

Membership has remained stable at around 500 subscribers and I am pleased to report that we continue to get regular enquiries about the ICC and many, upon receipt of their first copy of BING, wish they had joined us "years before". We on our part are happy that they have found us at last!

Copies of 'Bingang', 'The Crooner' and 'Bingtalks' have arrived recently and there does seem to be a general revival of interest in Bing's work. These associated journals brings news of the "Magic of Bing Crosby Volume Two" and at least two enthusiastic Bing fans are writing what they describe as 'balanced' books on Bing's unparallelled career. We await these developments with great interest.

NEW MEMBERS

It is pleasing once again to welcome new members to our midst and may I begin with an apology to **Paul Robinson** of Ipswich who joined us in July 1990, and yet we did not include him in our previous greetings. A most hearty welcome Paul. I'm sure that you would wish to join me in extending the hand of friendship to the following enthusiastic new members:-

Kevin Anderson (California), **Roger Schore** (New York), **Ernest Nagy** (Connecticut), **Robert Stratiff** (Virginia) all from the USA.

Mr. J. Klaver from Hilversum, Holland.

Mark Bakker (Avon), **John Benstead** (London), **Don Brewster** (Leics), **Mrs. G. Dunn** (Cambridge), **Donald Flear, David Lawrence** and **Albert Lewis** (Essex), **George Pearce** (Tyne and Wear), **Mr. A.E. Rayment** (Berkshire) and **Kenneth Higton** (West Yorkshire).

DEATHS

Sadly, I must report that the grim reaper has claimed three more of our stalwart members. As the old year ended we were shocked to learn that **Arthur Peto** of Burton-on-Trent had died, leaving his wife and four sons. Arthur was a keen member of the club and in recent years we had the privilege of seeing him at Leeds

Jim Lowe's demise was reported to us by Les Brice & Wally Oldfield and it was Les who reminded us just how kind Jim had been to fellow members. Jim had built up a large record collection and only recently he had sold his prized LPs to help others build their collections. Jim was known to many within the ranks of ICC and we extend our heartfelt sympathies to Jean Lowe at this sad time.

Renee Chester was a very enthusiastic supporter of the ICC and hundreds of members benefited from her determined efforts to bring US films and video material within their grasp. Renee helped members obtain the famous Spokane LPs from Larry Kiner and was a special friend of the Leeds meeting. We will never forget Renee's generous help and we extend to Dennis our very sincere condolences at this, the saddest time of his life. Elsewhere you will find a special tribute to Renee by Jim Reilly.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The 1991 accounts are presented below and it is pleasing to note that we were able to meet the cost of producing BING from members' subscriptions. However, we do need to grow and develop a healthy balance sheet and here we must acknowledge the invaluable contribution made by members who have made donations during the year. We thank our benefactors and wish to record our appreciation to the following who have made a donation since the last issue of BING:- **Geoffrey Probert, Tony Cunningham, Lionel Pairpoint, Brian Ford, Harry Ross, Arthur Smith, Roger Addey, John Bignall, J. Houghton, Mike Mansley, Lesie Gaylor, Jack Hobday, Ian Arnott, David Bostock, John Coombes, A.D. Fisher, Paul Hennesey, Bill Huntington, Ronald McCormick, Thomas Mooney, Alf Peyton, Trevor Wagstaff, Arnold Pope, Brian Lewis, George Patmore, Nick van der Seyp, Larry Farrell, Ragnar Uppman, Etty Gitts, Cyril Parker, Dave Spong, George Baillie, Maurice Beardmore, R.K. Hudson, Jose D Amico Bauab, Ron Bosley, Peter Monaghan, Goronwy Owen, Don Haizelden, John McVicar, E.W. Emery, Ken Heason.**

We salute them all and thanks to their generosity and the increased subscription for 1992 we should be able to maintain the annual fee at the present level until January 1994.

THE ICC's ENTHUSIATIC MEMBERSHIP

Your secretary is privileged to receive hundreds of 'enthusiastic' letters from members during the year and none more so than the missives from Stan White and Leslie Gaylor, two gents who, 40 years on, still show intense interest in their hobby — Bing Crosby. Stan is very active in writing letters to local radio stations and he has been very successful in getting Radio Cambridge to feature regular Bing

programmes. Les (now officially Bing's number one fan!), has ended another successful year with his appearance on Primetime, David Jacobs' TV programme. We owe much to these two enthusiasts for their unremitting effort in keeping Bing's name before the public.

1991 was a good year for Crosby fans with compact discs being issued in abundance, the continued release of **Limited Edition LPs** and of exceptional interest was the release of the **Magic of Bing Crosby** video and the publication of **Fred Reynolds'** superb first volume covering Bing's commercial recordings in depth.

The **Crosby Collection 1926-1934** is a beautifully crafted book and I urge members not to miss out on this first volume. Fred's text is a joy to read and his fine words are lovingly bound in blue and gold by John Joyce.

The New Year holds much promise with several CDs come including **Richard Hart's** imaginative compilation of late 30's and early 40's material. There will be second volumes of the 'Magic of Bing Crosby' and Fred's 'Crosby Collection' and maybe the two enthusiasts who are writing books on Bing's life and times may publish their much awaited texts. We have much to be grateful for.

And on this positive note I will conclude for this issue with a reminder that dues became payable on 1st January and if you have not paid them, no more issues of BING will be sent to you.

PLEASE, IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO — PAY YOUR 1992 SUBSCRIPTION NOW

Thanks to all members for their support and interest and please, keep in mind that BING 200 will be due in 2024! Do stay with us and until August — may I express the wish that 1992 will bring you the things you wish for.

Michael Crampton

INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31.12.1991

Income

	£
Subscriptions	3037.41
Donations — Individual Members	187.00
Donations (Leeds meeting)	222.50
Dennis Steele (Legacy)	176.80
Advertisements (Non members)	3.00
Cheque to ICC in error	3.50
Balance at 31.12.1990	1324.20
Interest 1991	68.37
	5022.78

Expenditure

	£
Printing BING 97-99	1635.00
Postage BING 97-99	692.00
Secretarial expenses	127.40
Postage (Dennis Steele items)	37.30
Renee Chester (Flowers)	30.00
Editorial expenses	26.60
Refunded cheques	18.50
Unpaid cheque	6.00
	2572.80
Balance at 31.12.1991	2449.98
	5022.78

Balance held in ICC account at 31.12.1991 ... 2449.98

Since the general trend of interest rates was downward during 1991 the interest accrued for the year was less than for 1990.

One Sweet Letter From You

Malcolm Macfarlane as Assistant Editor deals with general correspondece with members. Malcolm will be very pleased to hear from members and his address is given at the beginning of the magazine.

Jim Reilly, 27 Bealieu Road, North End, Portsmouth PO2 0DN.

. . . I have heard from MCA America what their intentions re Bing are and quote them as follows:-

"Next up will either be a multi-disc box set for Christmas 1992 or a multi-disc set focussing on the "On The Road" series of movies. Either way, there will be more Bing in the near (read 1992) future and beyond."

This of course is nice to know. They also said that the "Bing's Hollywood" series didn't sell well so will therefore be discontinued, which is rather disappointing to learn. Still it is good to hear that Bing

still features in their plans . . .

A.J. (Fred) Romary, 24 Wascussue Ct. New Canaan, CT. 06840-3942, USA.

. . . This is a far cry, but is there any chap your way that would be well informed about American film star William Boyd (Hopalong Cassidy)? I'm doing serious projects in this late De Mille star's interests.

(Asst. Editor: This appears to be from ***the*** *Fred Romary who was such a major contributor to the Crosby Collector magazine in the late 1960s. It's nice to hear from Fred again and if any members can help him in his quest, please write to him direct.)*

Richard Hart, Witley, 6 Torwood Close, Torquay, Devon TQ1 1EH.

As you are no doubt aware, I have been involved in trying to get a compact disc issued of more interesting tracks of Bing. This I am now very close to doing and I would like to thank the following people very much indeed without whose help this issue would not have been possible.

John Stedman of JSP Records who will be issuing this compact disct at his expense.

John R.T. Davies who has done a marvellous job of remastering the 78 records.

Derek Parkes and **John McNicholas** who loaned the 78s for this issue.

Fred Reynolds who wrote the cover notes for the CD.

I would also like to thank members who sent in their lists of tracks to help me pick the selection on this compact disc. My thanks go to the following people in particular for their help:-

Jim Lemon, Lionel Pairpoint, John Lawson, Stan White, Charlie Baillie, Ernest Sutkowski, Frank Whittaker, Neil Robinson and many others — thank you.

The tracks on the CD have changed slightly from the list given in BING 99 and the contents will probably be:

On Treasure Island
It Makes No Difference Now
When Mother Nature Sings Her Lullaby
Deep Purple
Sweetheart of Sigma Chi
Never In a Million Years
Devil May Care
Maybe I'm Wrong Again
The Moon Was Yellow
Riding Down The Canyon
Darling Nellie Gray
Silver On The Sage

Chapel In The Valley
Sierra Sue
Ah! Sweet Mystery Of Life
De Camptown Races
Beautiful Drearmer
For Love Alone
So Do I (Solo)
The Singing Hills
It's Always You
Down By The River
Sweethearts

All I want all members to do now is please buy a copy of this compact disc. Copies can be obtained from Derek Parkes so don't delay! There might be the chance of a second issue if this one sells well. I should therefore welcome more lists of tracks (name and address on back please).

(Asst. Editor:- Richard has done a tremendous job in getting the CD issued and we all thank him for his efforts. Let's hope it sells well enough to justify a second CD.)

Stan White, 57 Stanley St., Rothwell, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN14 2EA.

BING 99 is full of interesting articles, reviews, comments etc., and the most comprehensive writing about Bing in this edition must fall under the heading "One Week in 1944". It really does cover that week most fully, as far as Bing's activities are concerned. Incidentally, the photographs of Bing at the Stagedoor Canteen have reproduced rather well and I would imagine that Sir Lancelot Vining would be pleased to see them used in such a well designed magazine. I know Bing mentioned being with Broderick Crawford at some point during that week, which would indeed have been the case, as Broderick was the announcer on the Glenn Miller AEF programmnes. The only real mystery you raise is still the unanswered question of who is backing Bing on "Why Don't You Fall In Love With Me?". It has now been narrowed down to two bands, either Miller's AEF Band or a section of it, or the British Band of the AEF under George Melachrino. To me it sounds more like Miller, but others seem to be above to prove that it is the British Band. Indeed, I was once told that Mr. Geoff Milne has the complete programme it comes from, but that was not from Mr. Milne himself, so I'm still not sure!

In "The Way We Were" feature dealing with the Scotch Wool Pullover, Bing did have a photograph taken wearing it and I enclose a picture of this.

It's good to see both Leslie Gaylor and Richard Hart involved in successful projects to release Bing's copyright expired recordings, especially Richard, who has battled on against all odds to achieve his aims.

Peter Monaghan must think and hear exactly the same as me concerning certain Bing albums which were discredited. We could do with a CD re-issue of "Bing Sings Whilst Bregman Swings" as it is a superb album and ideal for radio plays. Incidentally, nobody will ever produce anything better to guarantee radio plays than the Ken Barnes addition of the Pete Moore Orchestra to those tracks Bing made with Buddy Cole. It is ideal material for radio use, but then that is how it started out in the first place.

The 1947 film "New Orleans" is actually very entertaining and uses Kid Ory's Jazz Band with Louis Armstrong leading it for the purpose of the film. Jazz-wise it is very authentic and the hit song was "Do You Know What I Means To Miss New Orleans". I guess that the mistake of thinking Bing was in the film came from someone remembering his film "Birth Of The Blues" which, in many ways, is a story which runs alongside the one told in the film "New Orleans".

I've just listened to the tape of Ken Crossland's interview on the Quality Europe FM programme and it really is excellent. Far better than most of us could have done 'live'. The interviewer was good too, because he obviously knew enough about Bing to avoid daft questions. On the other hand, he was ready to admit that he did not know about this and that, which made it flow along very naturally. The latter part of the interview must have been slightly difficult, trying to explain Bing's relationship with the first family. Ken handled that very well but nobody will ever know the full truth.

Has anyone else noticed that Barry Manilow's "Jingle Bells" is a direct take-off of Bing and the Andrews Sisters, even down to certain voice characterisatics and the Vic Schoen Band arrangement. I'm not complaining, it is a good effort. Just for the record, I never said that Manilow sounds like Bing, but he certainly used Bing's whole approach to the song, as do the girls doing the Andrews Sisters' part. A tribute to the original without a doubt that the very same arrangemnets throughout can still be used.

(Asst. Editor: Thanks Stan for the kind words and for the further information including photograph. I must admit to not having heard the Manilow version of "Jingle Bells" but I am delighted to read about it. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Two controversial points are raised in Stan's letter. Firstly where does "Why Don't You Fall In Love With Me" come from? Can our experts tell us please? Secondly Stan's comment about the Bregman album must touch a few nerves in view of the comments made over the last 30 years in various Bing magazines. What do members think? Were the critical comments made in the past simply those of the editors of the Crosby magazine? Please write to me with your comments. I'm going to sit down and listen to the album again before reaching a balanced conclusion.)

Bert Day, 35 Galla Crescent, Dalbeattie, Scotland DG5 4JY. (Tel: 0556 611215)

Following your article on Bing in the UK during 1944, I have made a few enquiries about the possibility of there being any better copies of the Variety Band Box show. It was certainly recorded by ORBS (Overseas Recorded Broadcasting Services) for broadcasting to the troops and the BBC and All India Radio Delhi had copies. I first wrote to Radio Delhi but they replied that all their 78s had been disposed of years ago.

I wrote to the "Answers Please" spot on the John Dunn Show (Radio 2) and the researcher telephoned me and said, "There is no-one old enough at the BBC to have any knowledge of ORBS, and in fact there is not even a reference to this set of recordings in the BBC Reference Library." It was therefore arranged for Peter Copeland of the National Sound Archives at the British Museum to answer my query and he said that the ORBS was the brain child of Basil Dean, a London theatre owner (he owned the Fortune and Theatre Royal, Drury Lane). Mr. Dean had already set up ENSA (sometimes cruelly known as Every Night Something Awful) and seeing all the top artists being called up, he approached Cecil Madden (Head of Light Entertainment at the BBC) and they jointly went to the War Office and got permission to set up a recording studio at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. It was agreed that serving entertainers in the Forces could be used to make a third of the output, the other two thirds were from those already employed by the BBC and not yet called up plus those who were unemployed and unfit for the Services.

The recordings were broadcast daily on the Forces Radio Station for the BBC and as radio stations in Europe were captured by the Allies, copies of the recordings were sent to them for their use. When the war in Europe ended, the entire stock in the country (including those at the BBC) was sent back to Radio Ceylon at Colombo. This radio station had the most powerful of the radio transmitters in the South East Asia Command. Mr. Copeland went on to say that the National Sound Archives only had three of the recordings which they had junked but the Imperial War Museum at Lambeth Road, London had around 1000 copies!

So, anxious to find out whether there were any Bing items amongst them, I wrote to the Record Section of the Museum and I had a reply last week. It seems that the records they have are as a result of a find by the British Army in a cellar in Germany and they kindly sent me a computer print-out giving full details of every one of the 1000 or so ORBS recordings. The bad news is that there is not one Bing item amongst them!

I have 200 of these ORBS recordings and not one of mine is duplicated in the ones held by the War Museum. Incidentally, the museum has transferred all the recordings on to tape and they can be heard by appointment with the Museum. The recordings I have include the Denny Dennis material offered in BING 99, RAF Squadronaires, the RAF Rhythm Quintet, the RAF Skyrockets (with Sgt. Leslie Douglas), the RAF Concert Orchestra (under Cyril Stapleton), Jimmy Leach and Sidney Torch Organs and so on.

Arising from the item on the John Dunn show, I received a telephone message from an ex-RAF

Sergeant who was stationed in Colombo in Ceylon. He told me that at the end of the war with Japan, the ENSA office in Columbo (who had thousands of the ORBS recordings) gave all of the records away to any of the British Forces who liked to call at the office in uniform. His unit filled a 30 cwt. truck!! I have since written to Radio Sri Lanka to see if they still have any of the old recordings and I will let you know the result in due course.

The Variety Band Box programme was definitely issued on the ORBS. I heard it when stationed in India at 18 MFH or 81 MFH and the programme with the British Band of the AEF is in the possession of collectors.

The search goes on.

(Asst. Editor: A fascinating letter from Bert. Just imagine a 30 cwt. truck full of those rare recordings including Bing's Variety Band Box show. The recordings ***must*** *have found their way back to collections in the UK. Memories and contributions on this subject will be welcomed if any members can tell us more.)*

Geoffrey Nicholson, 57 Tivoli Crescent, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 5NB.

BING 99 is a splendid issue and the piece about Bing in Bedford really triggered a poignant memory for me. I was browsing in a bicycle/gramophone shop when I was suddenly made aware of this unusual voice singing "Young and Healthy" — so different from the dance band type vocalist of that day. The year was 1933 and the record was a News Chronicle sponsored Brunswick with Japanese Sandman (by Wayne King) on the reverse. I was a boarder at Bedford School. "Please", "Dinah", "My Honey's Lovin' Arms" all followed resulting finally in over 500 78s and so on through LPs to CDs today.

The greatest moments of all were listening at 3 a.m. every Friday morning to Kraft Music Hall. Alarm clock — thermos of tea — headphones and Eddystone "Straight" receiver with plug in coils. 1936 (Jimmy Dorsey) to late 1938 when I moved from an office in London to Brighton and then came the TA and war. Another coincidence — I lived bang opposite the BBC Maida Vale studios in Delaware Road, where Bing made his final recording. We had seen him here in Brighton on the Monday.

The late twenties, thirties and forties are my favourite periods. I disposed of most of my collection, after recording it, when, as I told Reg Bristo, I became aware of my mortality! Soon to be 76.

(Asst. Editor: What images this letter conjurers up. Getting up at 3 a.m. to listen to Bing on the shortwave! It's all so much easier with cassette recorders, time switches and VCRs nowadays but I'm sure that it's not so exciting.)

Trevor Wagstaff, 49 Dawes Avenue, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 6AJ.

. . . It occurs to me that it would be very useful if a page of BING magazine could be devoted to addresses and names of where to write when requesting Bing films on TV/Radio etc and for furthering Bing causes e.g. the USA postage stamp for Bing. I notice from the press that Elvis Presley is to be pictured on a US stamp in 1993 as part of a 'Legends of American Music' series. Surely Bing will be included as well. However I should like to write to the USA philatelic bureau sometime to ask why Bing has not been the subject of a stamp so far when others that have, pale into insignificance in comparison to Bing.

I send a Christmas card to Ken Barnes every year referring each time to "the Poems". As I understand it, Bing recorded these for charity and you will recall that they were promised for inclusion with the 10th Anniversary Set. Later, it was said that they will probably never see the light of day. Why I wonder? . . .

(Asst. Editor: Good suggestion, Trevor and a selection of addresses will be seen on the back cover. I have no up-to-date information about the poems but I should love to see them issued.)

Andrew Rodgers, 131 Allan Street, H56/F10, Glasgow G40 4TE.

I enclose a cutting from our Glasgow newspaper.

Full house for Bing

BING CROSBY fan Frank Grant has spent £7000 on a home extension after collecting so many of the Old Groaner's records that his house was groaning under the weight.

More than 3000 discs crammed cupboards, wardrobes and even the space under beds. Now Frank, 71, has added a room to his house in High Street, Nairn, to accommodate MORE LPs.

Frank, who owned a pub in Gallowgate, Glasgow, said last night: "I've been listening to Bing since I was 15 and there's not a man or woman alive who can compare."

DAILY RECORD, Thursday, November 7, 1991

I was wondering if Frank Grant was an ICC member as I used to go into his pub many years ago when he and I were young men. I never knew then that he was a Bing admirer.

(Asst. Editor: Frank used to belong to the British Bing Crosby Society until the mid 1960s but since then he has gone his own way. If any members are in touch with him, it would be nice to show him the magazine as it is now, in case he can be tempted to rejoin us.)

John Bignall, 21 St. Andrews Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 2QB.

. . . The highlight of 1991 has to be the wonderful Fred Reynolds book. I concur with every word of Colin Pugh's article and look forward to volume 2 which Fred tells me is in an advanced state of readiness . . .

Fred Reynolds, 69 Heathmere Avenue, Yardley, Birmingham B25 8RQ.

May I, through your "Sweet Letter" column (and I hope this doesn't in any way sour it) thank all those members who have been kind enough to write to me about my books. Their taking the time and trouble is much appreciated and they might wish to know that all being well John and I hope to see Part 2 of "The Crosby Collection" published later this year.

My objective in writing "The CC" was that it should be an informative reference book made as "readable" as

possible, aims not always easily reconcilable. The fiction book was intended to provide some diversion for those who like to solve problems and puzzles by reasoning. To this end I set out for the reader every clue that came to the knowledge of the detective so that readers would be at no disadvantage — an exercise in logic that I hope is fun. One reader observed the oblique allusion ("Harold Crosbie") but not the fact that the incident described paralleled the burning down of a house belonging to Bing. I was amused by a line in Colin's review of the book when he said, quite rightly, that "there are no love scenes". I had been promised some steamy passages by a couple of distaff members of my family, but, alas, none was forthcoming. If there had been I might have had a best-seller on my hands. Maybe next time. . .

Inevitably, a few typing etc errors crept into "The CC" and a further close examination reveals:

P21: "pno — pno" should be "pno — piano"
P90: (bottom of page) "1944" should be "1941"
P199 (258) ("The Moon Was Yellow") Master number and take should be "De DLA 84-B"
P201: (260) ("Two Cigarettes In The Dark") "Kill That Story" was a show, *not* a film, and featured Gloria Grafton.
P209: "impercebtibly" should be "imperceptibly"

I am sure that those readers who spotted the errors will have enjoyed doing so and no grinding of teeth will now make any difference. Happy reading to all.

(Asst. Editor: Fred's 'CC' book is indeed a marvellous review of Bing's early recording work and we look forward to Part 2. Contact John Joyce if you want Part 1. I don't suppose that he has many spares but you might be lucky if you hurry.)

Charles Wilkinson, 8 Old Coach Lane, Belfast BT9

Thank you and the rest of the team for another superb BING which arrived in nice time for Christmas. I am grateful to all who work so hard to produce our magazine. I was disappointed that there was no follow up by any member to the Buddy Clark reference in BING 98 by Les Bates.

Around 1947/48, the late night record programme on Radio Eireann featured a record by a lovely voiced singer which became popular with listeners. The record was the definitive version of "How Are Things In Glocca Morra": the singer was Buddy Clark. A letter from Radio Eireann informed me that the record was an American pressing — unavailable here. Strangely this classic was never released here although a number of other Buddy Clark records (including duets with Doris Day) appeared on Columbia. Buddy Clark was the greatest — after Bing. In 1949 I walked into a tiny newsagents shop on Belfast's Lisburn Road for my paper. When I read that Buddy Clark had been killed in a plane crash I was shattered.

Somehow life seemed cruel and unfair. I felt something similar when Michael Holliday and Fritz Wunderlich died. Three great singers who died too young. If any one has all of Buddy Clark's records I would love to hear from them.

Quentin Rinehart, Director, The Bing Crosby Historical Society, P.O. Box, 216, Tacoma, Washington 98401, USA.

It's always such a delight to receive the latest issue of BING, and especially the August 1991 number which arrived this week.

Your editorial concerning the death of Dennis and how fans and admirers of Bing must view these events is right on target. I congratulate you for putting into words what all of us believe. While we cannot separate Bing the man, husband and father from Bing the entertainer, we must maintain our perspective and judge all these events in their overall context, not as isolated reactions to things that allegedly happened 30 or 40 years ago, if at all. I don't believe for a second that Bing was as cruel or abusive as some of the tabloid articles infer. It simply wasn't in the man's nature . . .

Ken Twiss has now retired from active participation in BCHS, although we still rely on him for guidance and advice. Ken will be 80 years old this year, and after a career as a chef at some very well-known Pacific Northwest restaurants in addition to his tremendous efforts to establish and manage this society for fourteen years, he has earned a rest. I can only hope to do half as well.

(Asst. Editor: It's good to hear from Quentin and somewhat belatedly we wish him every success to his role as Director of BCHS. The comments on Bing's family life are given fresh relevance following Mary Frances Crosby's appearance on the Donahue show in the USA last year. During the programme, Mary made the following comments:

". . . I had a really loving, nurturing upbringing and I still had problems in terms of how I looked. But I was able to take care of those problems probably because of how I was raised or whatever."

It is nice to see the second family making the right kind of statements about their home life. Bing could not have changed that much and perhaps we now have to consider the impact of Bing's two wives on their respective children bearing in mind the way they turned out.)

John Fleming, 12 Middle Street North, Driffield, East Yorkshire.

My thanks for the last issue.

That was a lovely natural photo of Bing on stage and I can only repeat Anne Shelton's words "he is just about the greatest thing that ever happened".

I never fail to marvel at the amount of output from Bing, he never played an instrument, he couldn't read music and yet that reputation at one time in his career — "One Take Crosby" showed his amazing memory. That was when there were some fairly lengthy verses before he got to the chorus.

I often wonder what would have happened if Al Rinker had got off and Bing had had to go it alone from the start. Makes you think. After well over 50 years of listening, Bing still gives me a great feeling.

I see Jack Manners has gone. He was one of my oldest Bing friends. I was in his house often.

(Asst. Editor: We receive an enormous amount of letters, like the last few, expressing appreciation for the magazine. Only a small number of these can be used but we are grateful for the encouragement we are given. It is acknowledged however that the magazine is far from perfect and we continue our efforts to improve. One criticism I occasionally hear is that BING is too bland, in the sense that it is gentle and agreeable. There is some truth in this as we tend to avoid 'knocking' other singers and other types of music. Ken Crossland in his first editorial in BING 93 laid down his policies and he has kept to them. Reg Bristo wrote practically every word of BING (except the Letters and Trading Post) and inevitably his own strong personality came through in the magazine. Ken made his intentions clear at the outset:

". . . the magazine is ***yours***. Other than in the Editorial column, you will not find a commentary by the editor running through the journal. Nor indeed will you find the editor writing the journal for you. You must subscribe and support by giving us your views, your articles and anything else you can offer."

We can be a little "gentle and agreeable" but we are only reflecting the contributions we receive. Any contentious items will therefore be welcomed. I was just about to say "John Marshall, where are you?" when in came a letter from Les Brice . . .)

Les Brice, 40 Crown Rd., Clacton-On-Sea, Essex CO15 1AT.

. . . I thought the December issue superb except for some very irritating problems. Firstly I left home for my son's house at 11.30 a.m. on Christmas Eve and the mag hadn't been delivered. When I reached home again on Friday afternoon (the 27th.) it had, but for the first time since we've been having a December issue of the 'Crosby Post" "Collector" or "BING" I was badly let down. Secondly I then turned to the new releases section i.e. Derek's Collector's Club. Now I know that Derek has been away, and that the magazine has to be printed to a timetable, but to leave out news of a Crosby Christmas album, that is I believe the first album to have a TV ad since 1977, is deplorable. Nor was the Pickwick "Christmas with Bing", which was featured quite heavily in Woolworth's since last October, mentioned or the other Pickwick CDs which contained Bing tracks. Worst of all was the failure to mention the marvellous Laserlight CD "White Christmas" that I found in a tiny back street shop in Colchester and have seen nowhere else. Three collectors who are fortunate enough to be working and don't get time to search all the shops or see much TV whom I spoke to over Christmas had not heard of the TV CD nor the Laserlight one and anyway all copies of the TV album were stripped from the display stands to make way for the sales. So quite a few of our members will have no news of two major CD releases until the middle of April, by which time they will most likely be unavailable. Surely a simple photostat containing the news would have sufficed and I wouldn't have thought at too great a cost. I would have thought personally that there would be far greater interest than in Keith Parkinson's series "The A — Z of Bing's Movies". Bing was the world's greatest popular singer and a new release of his songs on CD/cassette/album must be of more importance than a thesis on "Benchley, Robert". It's bad enough for those of us who can no longer to subscribe to Derek Parkes' newsheets and have to rely on *only* three issues of BING a year for our record news.

I'm sorry if this sounds like one long moan, but it seems so stupid for a mag devoted to Bing not to carry news of his latest reissues. Surely everyone who subscribes still buys his recordings?

Anyway the magazine apart from the delivery date, lack of current record news and "Benchley, Robert" et al was superb, some marvellous articles, very well produced and a joy to handle. I do appreciate all of those who give up so much of their free time (which is not *free* as their families and friends are being denied it) for us. What a pity though that the mag can't return to its old three monthly issues. I'd sooner have a slim 4 times a year mag with current record news that the glossy one we have now with news 6 months too late!

P.S. Not getting the mag for Christmas was one of the worst things that has happened to me in the past 10 years.

(Asst. Editor: Well, some sincerely held views and at least Les took the time to express them, fully realising that they might not be well received. It was Les who made the good suggestion in 1990 to publish BING in August not September. Taking his points one by one, the late delivery of BING is regretted although I understand that most UK members received their magazine just before Christmas. It was a larger issue than normal but we only gave the printer the same time to get it out. As a result, the slight delay in publishing the magazine took it into the heavy Christmas post thus losing us several more days.

The complaint about the lack of news on the latest releases is valid and we have been acutely aware of this. This is the reason for Derek Parkes issuing an interim newsletter. Membership of his club costs £2 and the newsletter service costs another £2 per annum. For the December issue of BING, copy date was October 8th, and Derek Parkes would normally have given us his article about that time. As he mentioned in the magazine, he had left for a holiday in Australia in September and his article had to be prepared earlier than usual. We added details of the Magic CD when sending the material off to the printer towards the end of October. The printer returned the proofs to us in mid-November and we corrected these and sent them back within a week or so. At that stage, we knew nothing about the new Christmas CDs although we did manage to alter the proofs to pass on news that the new video was out in the UK. We would probably not have drawn members attention to the Pickwick CDs as they had been issued in 1989 but it would have been nice to have publicised the new Christmas CD. A separate sheet would have been the only solution but I knew nothing about the CD until a week or so before Christmas when it was then too late. Les didn't tell me about it unfortunately.

We should all prefer to have a three monthly glossy edition of BING with up-to-date news but as Les appreciates this is not possible because of time and cost implications. The alternative of going back to a stencilled quarterly version of the magazine (as produced by Reg Bristo) is possible and no doubt this could be done if it had the overwhelming support of

members. However Les has started an interesting debate which we should like to continue. Please write and give us your views so that we are aware of your feelings.)

Joseph Baron, 6 Brook Road, Dersingham PE31 6LG.

I have been a fan of Bing's for most of my life. I had the good fortune to inherit a 78 rpm player when I was an infant and my love for music began there. I don't know what happened to the 78s but now I collect CDs, tapes, LPs and videos when I can get them.

I happen to be the same height as Bing with similar features (my older sister who is a trained singer was always telling me that I looked and sounded like him) so I entered "Stars In Your Eyes" and I managed to get on the show. I was naturally delighted to get so far.

I have been singing as a semi-pro on and off for years — dinner dances, 60s bands, country . . . but I have always enjoyed a bit of jazz as well.

I'm still performing occasionally and I have been urged to go for it on a full time basis. It is very tempting.

I have received several letters from Bing fans which I was delighted to receive, including one from Charles Culley. I loved every moment of the TV show and made many new friends through it.

I look forward to sharing this interest in good music with others and keeping Bing's unique work alive and appreciated.

(Asst. Editor: I missed Joe's appearance on the TV show although I did hear favourable comments about it. It was good that Bing's image was perpetuated through the show and it's nice to have Joe with us.)

Ted Burnell, 29 Knowsley Court, Rock Ferry, Merseyside L42 1QU.

We in the ICC are so lucky to have amongst us such analytical persons as Fred Reynolds (films), Colin Pugh (alternate takes), Bishop & Bassett (discography) and there are those who make listings of the radio programmes over the years. But I have yet to see a comprehensive Bibliography and I'm sure that there must be a couple of dozen books written about Bing over the years. Such a project would not take up too much space in our magazine and I'm sure would prove to be a welcome piece of Crosbyana to all readers.

(Asst. Editor: Good idea. Have we any members who would care to send us a listing of books about Bing? The more people who respond the better as we can then draw up a composite list for publication in BING. All contributions will be acknowledged.)

CELLULOID CROSBY

Our resident film buff, Keith Parkinson again comes up with a double header. In keeping with our one hundredth issue, Keith finds a link between Bing, film and the number 100, followed by yet more of the A-Z of Bing's movies. Roll 'em Keith.

For the one hundredth issue of 'BING' it seemed appropriate for the 'Celluloid Crosby' piece to reflect this milestone achievement. The obvious move would be to write about Bing's hundredth film. If a reference is made to Fred Reynolds' film bible, 'The Road To Hollywood', then this proves to be 'Cinerama's Russian Adventure'. Strictly speaking, it was not Bing's hundredth because Fred excluded certain film appearances from his main listing. A chronological count, including peripheral movie involvement, was documented in the listing compiled by Colin Pugh and myself for 'Bingville News'. Number one hundred there is 'The Heart of Showbusiness'. The problem now is to weave an article around either of those options. There is no reason why that should not happen, except that this column is likely to expire at the end of the next paragraph.

The alternative is to cheat. The only songwriter to have written for Bing's films and attained his century was Irving Berlin. When he died a couple of years ago we were reminded in obituaries and radio retrospectives of the impact he had on twentieth century popular music. This extended to movies and 'White Christmas', 'Blue Skies' and 'Holiday Inn' are three Crosby movies that benefited from his compositions with box-office and posterity as evidence.

We are going to avoid the obvious in the Crosby-Berlin connection and look first at a Bing 'Fringe' movie, and then at a major musical that never was.

The United Artists film, 'Reaching for the Moon', was conceived as a full blown musical from Berlin with a slender storyline involving Douglas Fairbanks as a financier and Bebe Danies as the aviatrix who beguiles him. At the original writing stage it was intended that Bing would appear in the picture, and Berlin actually studied the Crosby vocal delivery in order to produce something musically appropriate. Even in 1930 he sensed that he would be working with Bing on future assignments. By the middle of that year, United Artists, the studio of which Fairbanks was part owner, decided that there was no market for musicals. The introduction of talkies had resulted in a spate of "all talking, all singing, all dancing" efforts, and picture-goers were tiring of them. Berlin said: "Musicals were all the rage out there (Hollywood) and then they weren't. Out went the songs." The songs in this case were five Berlin compositions which were still in the film at the time of its press showing in November, 1930. However, by the time of its release on December 29th, four of the songs had been jetisoned. It's unlikely that any Bing contribution ended on the cutting room floor. His one song — 'When The Folks High Up Do the Mean Low Down' — was filmed one evening after his performance at th Cocoanut Grove as part of the Rhythm Boys. Bebe Daniels and June McCloy were present in the studio to provide vocal support.

In 1961, Miles Kreuger, producer for Columbia Records, established a friendship with Berlin. Because he was a musical scholar Kreuger asked Berlin about the fate of the deleted score. When Kreuger was interviewed about that meeting he recalled Irving's crusty

response: 'Miles, I'm really astonished at you. This line of questioning is strange. You're just like all the rest of them.' Berlin did not like to be reminded of failure. He never spoke to Kreuger again. Crosby collectors have to thank Kreuger for the Bing re-issues on Columbia Records in the late sixties.

The Bing/Berlin musical that never was is 'Say It With Music'. We can follow its course chronologically for most of the 1960s.

1963 The idea was born. M.G.M. Producer Arthur Freed, best known for the musical 'Singin' In the Rain', discussed the project with Irving Berlin and a budget of $9 million was considered appropriate for a large scale musical. The scope had to be broad because Freed envisaged a musical biography of Berlin. The only difficulty was finding an acceptable script which would allow the interpolation of Berlin Songs. On March 3rd Berlin was present at an award dinner at which Frank Sinatra sang a medley of Berlin songs. He was being touted as the star of the film and M.G.M. were confident enough to offer one million dollars for the rights to Berlin's compositions to be used in the picture. Berlin agreed to write ten new songs and assign the rights to twenty-five of his existing hits. It is interesting to see Berlin the businessman at work here, because he stretched the deal over ten annual instalments for tax advantages. Furthermore, the money was payable whether or not the film went ahead! On April 30th, M.G.M. initiated a press release. Vincente Minnelli would direct Sinatra and Judy Garland and a release date sometime the following year was projected. Bing headed a roster of singers to help out the two leading players with the Berlin vocals. The other guests tentatively committed to the film were Ethel Merman, Fred Astaire, Pat Boone, Bobby Darin, Johnny Mathis and Connie Francis. Not surprisingly, the budget was now upped to $15 million. To strengthen the story on which the songs would be hung, writer Arthur Laurents was engaged. He had proved himself with the recent successes 'West Side Story' and 'Gypsy'. Meanwhile, in September, Berlin told the London Press 'S.I.W.M.' is still on. He did not know at that stage that Laurents' script would not impress him. The finished screenplay was delivered to M.G.M. in November. It was about an international minstrel and Berlin said, 'No', even though the international theme was matched to an appropriate cast: Sophie Loren (Italy), Julie Andrews (Britain), Brigette Bardot (France) and Ann-Margaret (U.S.A.).

1964 Not surprisingly, the story was farmed out to another writer. This was Leonard Gershe, who visualised Fred Astaire functioning 'As a kind of Greek Chorus'. Producer Freed said 'No' this time, and brought in his long time collaborators Betty Comden and Adolph Green. They went back to basics and examined the Berlin phenomenon. They suggested three separate stories set in 1911, 1925 and 1965.

1966 Two years later that script was rejected, even though Comdon and Green received £150,000 for their troubles. Writer George Wells was brought in.

1967 M.G.M. handed the role of producer-director to Blake Edwards. As he was married to Julie Andrews it was easy to predict his choice of leading lady. Filming was set to commence in September of the following year.

1969 M.G.M. changed hands and Kerk Kerkorian, its new owner, conferred with James Aubrey, its new President. They cancelled the film on the grounds that Berlin was a musical has-been, and they were therefore unwilling to risk $15 million of studio money. But Irving got his million dollars.

M.G.M. probably reached the right conclusion. it would be difficult to imagine Bing, Sinatra, Astaire and the likes in a full blown large screen musical at the end of the sixties. Audiences seemed as fed up with musicals as when United Artists passed judgement on 'Reaching for the Moon' forty years earlier. It could be said that Irving Berlin was in at the beginning and end of Bing's career in Hollywood musicals.

THE A-Z OF BING'S MOVIES

BLACK MOONLIGHT *(Song)* Stanley Green was right first time when he described this song as a Dolorous dirge of suicidally inclined Harlem resident. Although we closely associate this song with Bing it was introduced in the Paramount film "Too Much Harmony" by Kitty Kelly, who mimed to Barbara Van Brunt's vocal. The film was made in June and July 1933 and Bing recorded it the following month. It would be reasonable to assume that he felt the song fitted him like a glove and committed it to wax at the first opportunity. The song's composers, Sam Coslow and Arthur Johnson, wrote all the songs for "Too Much Harmony".

BLONDELL, JOAN (1909-1979). Actress who was in one Crosby film as his leading lady, 'East Side of Heaven'. She plays Bing's fiance Mary Wilson, to whom he is always about to get married but . . . A bright, bubbly actress, Joan Blondell enlivened many a routine picture from her debut in the 1930 film 'Office Wife' to her retirement half a century later with 'The Woman Inside'. Joan Blondell made her name in the thirties as a wise cracking broad with a heart of gold. Her part in 'East Side of Heaven' was untypical. At the time she was reaching the end of her Warner Bros. heyday where she had scored in such films as 'Gold Diggers of 1933' (1933), 'Footlight Parade' (1933), 'We're in the Money' (1935) and 'Gold Diggers of 1937' (1936). The next decade saw memorable performances in the likes of 'Topper Returns' (1940), 'A Tree Grows in Brooklyn' (1945) and 'Nightmare Alley' (1947). In the nineteen fifties she concentrated on stage work. Her more memorable later films saw

her assigned character parts in such as 'The Cincinnati Kid' (1965) and 'Grease' (1978). On the personal side she tried three show business marriages to cameraman George Barnes (1933-35), Actor Dick Powell (1936-45) and producer Mike Todd (1947-50). All failed, but provided her with a rich vein of material to mine for her semi-autobiographical novel 'Centre Door Fancy', which came out in 1972.

BLUE HAWAII *(Song)*. This Academy Award winning song from Paramount's 1937 Bing movie 'Waikiki Wedding' was written by Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger. Bing is joined by Shirley Ross for vocal honours in a sequence in the film where both are on a boat trip to a volcanic island. 'Waikiki Wedding's' main song was intended to be 'Sweet Leilani'. Lyric writer Robin had to persuade Rainger to write music to fit the words. Even when the composing task was completed Rainger thought it inferior and protested at its publication. Of course it went on to become a standard and Paramount got their money's worth by using it as the title for a 1961 Elvis Presley vehicle with the star singing the title song over the opening credits.

Bing, Shirley Ross and Blue Hawaii

BLUE OF THE NIGHT (1933). One reeler made as part of a job lot for producer Mack Sennett in 1931. Six were shot in the late spring and summer of that year and released by Educational Pictures over the next two years. 'Blue of the Night' was the penultimate in the initial release pattern. In the twenty minute running time we have a great deal of plot plus four Crosby vocals. Bing plays himself, a famous radio singer. Leading lady Margie 'Babe' Kane boasts she is engaged to Bing failing to recognise him when they both take a trip by train. Her husband to be, played by Franklin Pangborn is annoyed at this betrayal/deception before denouncing Bing as an imposter. The film's famous ending has Bing driving off with the girl and singing 'Where The Blue Of The Night Meets The Gold Of The Day' as conclusive proof that he is that well known baritone. Bing's other vocals are 'Auf Wiedershen', 'My Silent Love' and 'Ev'ry Time My Heart Beats', none of which were recorded for issue on records.

Various clips from this Sennett Short were included in the 1949 compilation film "Down Memory Lane".

BLUE SKIES *(Film)*. This 1946 Paramount Picture was stuffed with songs written by Irving Berlin, so it should come as no surprise that the idea for the picture was also his. Arthur Sheekman wrote the screenplay about two former song and dance men (Bing and Fred Astaire) who vie for the attentions of leading lady Joan Caulfield. You could say that Bing was undisputed winner as the plot allows him to marry her twice. The time span of the movie covers 1919 to 1946 and uses 17 old and 4 new Berlin songs in a series of settings of "Theme" Nightclubs.

It was never intended that Fred Astaire should co-star with Bing. Dancer Paul Draper was signed up and then dropped when the studio discovered his acting skills were not on a par with his dancing technique.

The film's budget was $3 million and its world-wide rentals tripled that figure on its initial release.

BLYTH, ANN (1928-). Bing's leading lady in 'Top O The Morning' (1949) who also appeared in the short film 'You Can Change The World', released the following year. She played Barry Fitzgerald's daughter in the former, and as such was on the receiving end of a couple of love ballads from Bing. The question we have to answer is whether she is a singer turned actress or vice versa. Certainly her early career channelled her into Light Opera where she was a soprano with the San Carlo Opera Company. She played juvenile roles in Hollywood movies, making her presence felt in the Oscar nominated part of Joan Crawford's daughter in 'Mildred Pierce' (1945). Musical films which followed 'Top O' The Morning' include some memorable M.G.M. starring parts in 'The Great Caruso' (1951), 'Rose Marie' (1954), 'The Student Prince' (1954), 'Kismet' (1955) and 'The Helen Morgan Story' (1957). The last film marked her retirement from Hollywood. The movies had no use for leading ladies with trained singing voices. Since then she has made infrequent forays into musical stage productions.

BRACKEN, EDDIE (1920-). Actor born Edward Vincent Bracken, who never appeared with Bing in three Crosby pictures. In 'Star Spangled Rhythm' (1942), he played sailor Johnny Webster taking his friends on a tour of the Paramount backlot under the impression that his dad owned the studio. That film's finale had Bing singing 'Old Glory'. Two years later he appeared as himself in 'Duffy's Tavern' and then in 1945 he was in "Out of this World". This was a Crosby non-picture in that Bing's voice came out of Bracken's mouth each time Eddie burst into song. The 1940s was Eddie Bracken's decade and afterwards, although he remained in showbusiness, he never enjoyed the fleeting popularity that came when America was at war. The hits during those four years were 'Caught in the Draft' (1941), 'The Fleet's In' (1942), 'Sweater Girl' (1942), 'The Miracle of Morgan's Creek' (1944); 'Hail The Conquering Hero' (1944) and 'Hold that Blonde' (1945). By the early 1970s he had to content himself with film work such as providing a voice for the feature cartoon 'Shinbone Alley'. Otherwise cabaret work

and occasional TV appearances serve as the public's only reminder of a promising newcomer of half a century ago.

BRING ON BING. Film released by Astor Pictures Corporation in 1935. It was a short short in that it was an edited version of the 21 minute 'Billboard Girl' made for Mack Stennett in 1931. The two songs from that picture retained for 'Bring on Bing' were 'For You' and 'Were You Sincere'.

BRITISH MOVIETONE NEWS carried the official opening of the Stage Door Canteen in Piccadilly, London. This was carried out by the Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden in August 1944. The newsreel then shows Dorothy Dickson introducing Bing, who sings 'San Fernando Valley'.

BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME. Film released in 1975 which utilised Bing's recording of the title song together with his first recording of "Where the Blue of the Night". A caricature of Bing was also glimpsed when a segment of the early thirties colour cartoon 'Hollywood Steps Out' was utilised. The 109 minute feature 'Brother Can You Spare A Dime' was a collection of clips documenting America from the Depression to the bombing of Pearl Harbour.

I'LL SING YOU A THOUSAND LOVE SONGS

Denny Dennis was often referred to as Britain's Bing Crosby, although as Mike Carey tells us, this was not a label that Dennis actively sought or courted. Mike has recently formed The Denny Dennis Music Society and kindly agreed to provide an article about Denny — and the Crosby connection.

Denny Dennis is alive and well and living in happy retirement in Cumbria. He's excited by the prospect of the publication of his life story*, by the release of his first solo CD and of the relaunch of his fan club. And, as ever, he still does not like being known as Britain's Bing Crosby!

It's a label that was first pinned on him by bandleader Roy Fox back in the thirties. Much as Denny had cause to be grateful to Fox, who signed him up as a raw youngster from the terraced back streets of Derby and plunged him into the dazzling world of London cafe society and launched him to fame on his Wednesday night broadcasts from the Kit-Cat Club, he nevertheless has often found the soubriquet an embarrassment.

He has never consciously set out to impersonate Crosby (except in the 1950s in a music hall show we'll come to later) although he admits he did study Bing's early 78s, along with those of Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday in the dining room of his parents' home in Howard Street, Derby to find out more about style and phrasing.

How quickly he learned, how splendidly he developed his technique and his resonant baritone voice can be seen from a career in which he made hundreds of recordings (he is featured on no fewer than 53 long-playing records) with the bands of Fox, Bert Ambrose, Jack Jackson, Sid Phillips, Jack Hylton and — not least — Tommy Dorsey.

In his hey-day he was a household name. He had suits custom-made for him by London tailors. He smoked cigarettes that bore a "DD" monogram. And when his Triumph car broke down on tour, he telephoned not the AA or the local garage but the manufacturers in Coventry who sent replacement parts for him all over the country!

He made hundreds of broadcasts (and later many television appearances), not only on the BBC but on commercial stations Radio Luxemburg and Radio Normandy and in America with the Dorsey band. And yet for a quirkish turn of events when he sang a song at what would have been an all-instrumental "Melody Maker" dance band contest, he might have spent his life working as an electrician on the LMS railway.

Denny's song was heard by the "Melody Maker" editor, Percy Mathison Brooks who recommended him to Fox. The amiable American bandleader heard him, sent him away to iron out a few rough edges for a year and then took him on for five years. And it was Fox who, a few moments before a broadcast, decided his new vocalist should be known as Denny Dennis . . . and not Dennis Pountain, the name he was born with.

Denny with Roy Fox in 1935
(courtesy of Denny Dennis Music Society)

Denny's career was off and running. Before joining Fox he had made a handful of records with Jack Jackson (including, remarkably, in view of his later Dorsey connections "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You") while appearing at the Spider's Web, a roadhouse on the Watford by-pass. But he was soon cutting four sides a week for Fox at the old Decca studios in what used to be Chelsea Town Hall.

For five years he starred with the Fox orchestra and made more than 200 recordings. When the band were not at their West End residency, they toured the length and breadth of Great Britain (although Denny never did come to terms with living out of a suitcase), broke house records at theatres and cinemas and when the band broke up in 1938 Denny was in the top rank of vocalists.

Denny and Roy parted company amicably (he would later attend the bandleader's funeral in 1982) and the singer had no shortage of offers. He opted to join Ambrose. One attraction was that the band appeared settled in its residency at the Mayfair Hotel, but they were soon touring, which was an influential factor in Denny leaving the band in 1939 and deciding to go it alone for the first time.

By then he had a solo recording contract with Decca's Rex label, was working on both commercial radio stations and made many personal appearances, often taking in as many as three London town hall venues on a Saturday night. By then he was living in Brixton and he could park his Triumph coupe safely in the street outside his flat all night . . . not a practice which residents would recommend to-day.

With the threat of war, the commercial stations closed down, other work became limited and Denny was happy to accept an offer to join a band run under the aegis of Jack Hylton (but directed by Billy Ternent) which worked for the BBC in their Bristol studios. By then the BBC had moved their variety and light music departments to the west of England so that, in the event of Broadcasting House being put out of action by a bomb, public morale could be maintained by a regular output from Bristol.

In the often chaotic world of wartime broadcasting, Denny sometimes did as many as six shows a day as a contract artist. Sometimes rehearsals were out of the question. The BBC built a bomb-proof studio at Clifton and Denny and his musical colleagues could go nowhere, not even the cinema or the pub next door, without leaving details of their whereabouts in case of an alarm.

But the regular exposure on the air increased Denny's stature as an artist. By now he was becoming known in the States, largely due to his recording of "South Of The Border" with Ambrose and one day shortly after the outbreak of war he received an offer to join Paul Whiteman which, if accepted, would probably have heightened the comparisons with Crosby.

Although it was wartime, two Government departments gave Denny the necessary permission; he would, after all, have been earning precious dollars for his country. But the Ministry of Labour would not allow him to travel . . . and not long afterwards he had to turn down another offer from American bandleader Sammy Kaye for the same reason.

In 1940 Denny enlisted in the RAF, along with musicians like Cyril Stapleton. He served until 1946, leaving with the rank of Corporal. He entertained the troops both in this country and in Iceland (by coincidence, where his brother Eric, better known as singer Barry Gray, had been lost at sea in 1941) and made many more broadcasts, sometimes with bands like the Sky Rockets.

He also achieved the ambition of a lifetime and met Bing Crosby. The great moment came in August 1944 at the opening of the Stage Door Canteen in Piccadilly when among those present — apart from Bing — were Fred and Adele Astaire, Jack Buchanan, Dorothy Dickson and Anthony Eden.

In his book "The Big Bands Go to War" (Mainstream Publishing £20), Chris Way recounts how the Squadronaires leader Jimmy Miller told him: "Everybody wanted to be at the opening because Bing Crosby was there. Denny Dennis begged me to get him a ticket just to see his idol. He even went down on his knees, just to see Crosby. He was in the front row when Bing made his entrance. He (Bing) was as bald as a coot. The Squadronaires performed two songs with him. We also backed Fred Astaire while he danced. It was a great night."

Denny, in fact, got to meet Bing backstage — and plucked up the courage to ask him for his autograph! It's a meeting he still recalls vividly. "We managed a brief chat," says Denny "and Bing said he had heard some of my records and was very complimentary about them."

Looking back at the way people have connected Crosby and himself, Denny says forthrightly: "You know, I never at any time encouraged this business of being known as the British Bing Crosby. True, there was no greater admirer of Bing than myself but I never set out to imitate him and to be regarded as the second Crosby was the last thing I wanted. I liked to think I had a style of my own."

Oddly enought it was only in wartime that Denny got to sing the Crosby hit "White Christmas" (on a programme called "Best Sellers" which he recorded for the Overseas Recorded Broadcast Service). After demobilisation, Denny continued to broadcast and to make records and later in 1946 came the recording that was to change his life. He was smitten by a song that Spencer Williams had based on the Django Reinhart melody "Nuages" and — after a good deal of persuasion — Decca, for whose main label he was now under contract, allowed him to record it.

It was called the "The Bluest Kind Of Blues." Stanley Black needed only two days to pen a lush string arrangement which stood comparison with those that Axrl Stordahl had been writing for Frank Sinatra. The late Joe Crossman contributed a haunting alto sax solo and, with Denny in fine, relaxed voice, the result was a recording which still sounds fresh and original today.

Importantly for Denny, it caught on in America where Duke Ellington — among others — played it on his New York DJ show. Soon Denny had an offer to join Benny Goodman. And while he was still mulling it over he received another one from Tommy Dorsey which he immediately accepted.

In March 1948, Denny flew from Heathrow in a prop plane of American Overseas Airlines. He was the first English-born singer to join an American big band yet though his move had made headlines in the musical press there was no battery of reporters and cameramen to see him off . . . only a handful of close friends.

Sadly he was with Dorsey for not much more than a year. After his debut with the band in Orlando, Florida he toured the Eastern states, appeared at famous venues like the Steel Pier in Atlantic City, Madison Square Garden and the Hotel Pennsylvania, but because the American Federation of Musicians' recording ban was in force at the time he cut only five tracks for RCA Victor with TD.

Denny, with Tommy Dorsey's Orchestra 1948 (courtesy of DD Music Society)

On his return to England he again worked as a solo artist. He guested with various bands on radio shows and continued to record until the late 1950s when he spent a happy period with the late Sid Phillips and his Orchestra, but the music scene was changing all the time and by the late fifties Denny found himself treading the music hall boards again.

The show was called "Disc Doubles", a gimmick designed to the record-buying public. The bill featured no fewer than 11 singers who each impersonated one singer . . . names of the fifties like Mario Lanza, Frankie Laine, Frankie Vaughan, Elvis Presley and so on. Of course, Denny's star was Bing Crosby.

Denny was the first to appreciate the irony of that. Having spent most of his life trying to shrug off the Crosby label, here he was having to impersonate him . . . or risk being out of work. But Denny, as ever, was nothing if not professional and though he now found himself appearing at venues like the Opera House, Workington instead of on Broadway, he threw himself whole-heartedly into the job.

Relations were sometimes strained. There was a generation gap and Denny found some of the young performers unbelievedly full of themselves considering their lack of experience and (in some cases) talent. Few close friendships were formed although three of the performers, the Presley, Louis Armstrong and Lanza impersonators, still keep in touch with him.

He also had to take one unexpected criticism. One provincial critic complained that his Crosby impersonation was slightly off because he held notes that Bing could not have reached! And most of them queried what a man of his rich talent was doing in the show in the first place.

It was just one more episode in the life of Denny Dennis, artist and gentleman. To-day he looks back on it all with a sense of quiet satisfaction, a gleam of humour in his blue eyes. He is one of the few survivors of the golden age of British dance music and I hope — no I suspect — that the events of the next few months might bring about something of a mini Denny Dennis revival and with it a fresh appraisal and appreciation of his talents.

© Mike Carey.

* Mike Carey is the author of "I'll Sing You A Thousand Love Songs — The Denny Dennis Story" to be published in hardback and paperback this year by Pinnacle Printing, 44 Friargate, Derby DE1 1DF. (Tel: 0332-372707). Information about the Denny Dennis Music Society is available from the same address.

THE DENNY DENNIS MUSIC SOCIETY

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TIME MARCHES BACK . . .

A phrase familiar of course to listeners to the Kraft Music Hall, when Ken Carpenter introduced Bing's "nostalgia" spot. We borrow it here to introduce a retrospective element into BING 100, looking back at some of the highlights of issues 1-99.

BING was first published on 25 January 1965. It grew out of a split in the Crosby ranks, and indeed the first few issues were marked by reference to a feud of some type. Happily it all settled down and for several years BING and another new publication, THE CROSBY COLLECTOR, existed peacefully side by side, until the latter ceased publication in the early 70s.

The first BING makes interesting reading. The international aspect comes across strongly, particularly from Australia. There are also one or two interesting landmarks . . . the release of "White World Of Winter" as Bing's Christmas single for 1964 . . . the birth of the Hollywood Palace . . . the featuring of "Road To Bali" as BBC's Christmas Night film . . . and much to Frank Murphy's chagrin, "Going My Way" on BBC 2 over the Christmas period — but with the "new" channel not due to reach Frank in the North-East until March 1966!

BING'S founder, Frank Murphy

Frank Murphy continued as Editor of BING until 1970 and he later returned to the Crosby scene when he published BING PICTORIAL. In those days, BING was typed out on stencils which were then duplicated and I think it is true to say that Frank was not a trained typist. We got used to his typing errors and occasionally erratic spelling. Frank was very good natured about the leg-pulling he endured, so much so that he actually published a most amusing article by Fred Reynolds highlighting his defects. This article was published in BING 12 in 1968 and later repeated in BING 30. It is with great pleasure that we reproduce it again twenty years later to remind us of those far off days.

TO FRID FROM FRUNK

by Fred Reynolds

It is not, you will understand, my purpose to give concern to the many regular readers who rejoice in happy association but I must report that my relations with Frank Murphy the editor are becoming less cordial. And it is all his own fault. We used to be so friendly: "Murphy", I would say, "that's a good little magazine you've got; well done my good man." "Thank you kindly", he would instantly reply touching his cap, "you are the brightest jewel in its crown". What then has caused the rift in the rapport? Nothing less than that secretly, and underhandedly, he has been taking instructions on how to type.

For many years I held the undisputed distinction of being the world's worst typist, the opprobrium from which kept me awake at night for long seconds. I held the championship against all comers, was even worse than the office typist and possibly the most stupendous failure since the Edsel motor car. Then one day, long ago, out of the blue of the night, I received from Frank my first letter. It filled me with pleasure quite apart from the sunny nature of the contents. I gazed with rapture at the pages, and if it wasn't a real psychedelic experience it was the nearest thing to it, without actually taking LSD. "Deer Frid" it began. "I wus hippy§ get etc. etc." You will be quick to see what a boost this was to my ailing ego. After much perseverance I had reached, with the 'pick and peck' system, a top speed of 14 words a minute with only seven errors, but I still couldn't persuade myself that I was good. All practice had brought nothing but despair but now, in a thrice, the whole scene had changed. The spelling in Frank's letters was of such appalling insensitivity and the appearance of it so bizarre that the task of deciphering it might have seemed hopeless. Not so but far otherwise and atrophied indeed would my imagination have been if it had not leapt at the prospect held out, the letter would have repaid not only deciphering but setting to music.

The first letter became for me a thing of beauty to exceed anything that inspired Keats. I had it framed and set in a prominent position and whenever I felt low would fondly gaze upon it. So through the years our correspondence blossomed. Early letters from him were decoded only after numerous alphabetical permutations and invariably contained the "Frid" salutation and the concluding "Weby jest vithes, Frunk". When I once mentioned to Frank that I had somehow managed to get my finger stuck between L,;O and P he cheerfully urged me "nit to wurry" as he had twice had his thumb under the roller. It is true, of course, that my own success was still less then total but I recall fondly how I sent him a subscription when I thought he was starting another club for somebody called "Wing Crumby". I remember too, that he once informed me that a new record had been issued in the CLP series and I had a large city store turn out three branches and a warehouse before I realised that he meant CBS. That was my fault, of course, for by now we knew each other's form and our only real difficulties were caused by vital words being incorrectly typed. It came as no surprise when he referred to the "immoral Bing" as in our two-man super league one dropped letter presents no problem at all, but a stranger reading our correspondence would never crack the code. If SMERSH had used the system it would have driven 007 out of business before he could say "Dr. No". "Dear Frunj" I would say. "Di let me know whin to send thi stenvil" and he would reply "Dwar Frid. Kot mr jabe ut as qyiclly ad piddable". (You will see how superior was my skill). In 'CALL ME LUCKY', Bing said he was variously called "Bing Crovony" and "Bim Crossland" but Frank's letters reached imaginative heights reserved for rarer minds. I rather liked his "Bang Bromby" and his succulent reference to Bing's recording of "Mu osle if gilded creams" was most refreshing. Later, when Frank told me that he would "white before Xmaz" I realised that he had struck yet again.

A friend of mine, a director of a small firm of stationers, lets me have Correctine cheaply and usually sends me a complimentary bottle for each article I write. I understand that Frank raised some funds for the club by selling my colourful stencils as abstract works of art, reminiscent of Pablo Picasso's pink period. It will, I am sure, be difficult for you to keep a dry eye in your appreciation of my extreme concern in receiving from the perfidious Murphy recent letters showing a marked improvement in his typing ability. Not only does this seriously undermine the esoteric value of our exchanges but it also relegates me to my former position. I can conclude only that he is jealous of my skill and has resorted to secret lessons and practice or that he has just discovered that he should remove his gloves (sneer! sneer!). Unfortunately, just as I was about to say something really nasty and work in a little appropriate invective, I find that I have come to thi and ob my lazt byttle of cOrrictyne flued. Jost my lick.

FRID R?YN&lDS

John Bassett took over from Frank in 1971 and remained as Editor of BING until 1975. John played a major part in the discographies produced in those years and he has kindly given us permission to publish his booklet "The Crosby 78s — English Listing" in a forthcoming BING. Members will also recall John's Bingville News magazine which he edited for a number of years.

Reg Bristo, as Secretary of the ICC, had been a major contributor to BING for several years and he took over as Editor from John. Reg had firm opinions on most subjects but his enthusiasm leapt from the pages of the magazine. He presided over the exciting years 1975 to 1977 when Bing was so active. Reg's work at that time is fascinating to read how and he managed to convey the sentiments of us all so well. There was so much I wanted to reprint and it seems invidious to select only one article from Reg's huge output. I have however picked his coverage of the first Palladium series of shows in BING 43 (Sept. 1976) as I feel that this is a superb example of Reg at his best.

HISTORY WAS MADE! Musical History . . .

JUNE JULY **THE PALLADIUM** 1976

and for completeness, embracing the Gaiety Theatre Dublin, and the Usher Hall Edinburgh

Where to begin? The biggest job surely, we've ever had to undertake. True, we've reported Bing here on visits, golfing, shooting, horse-racing and other holiday pursuits. We've reported him here for the Parkinson Shows &c and way, way back no doubt my predecessors had the job of reporting Mr. Crosby here for an extended stay for the filming of ROAD TO HONG KONG.

But its for certain nobody has ever had the task — gladly if apprehensively undertaken — of reporting the real live Bing at a real live theatre in Britain. At London's famous Palladium the only real theatre left, perhaps, fitting to receive the elder statesman of world entertainment. Bing did mention something about the history, or the hallowed halls, of this theatre when he revised the lyrics of his opening song THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY. And the London Palladium has come to be recognised as the theatre where the world's best artists have appeared. Some, alas, were of dubious star-quality in a world where things seem to be devalued — and not only in the currency sense.

But now there can be no doubt of the authenticity of any claim concerning the presentation of the greatest artists in the world. For Bing has, at last, appeared there. And demonstrated in no uncertain manner that the best and greatest has appeared on its famous stage today.

But everyone knows the story of the Palladium? And the Gaiety Theatre in Dublin, as well as the renowned Usher Hall in Edinburgh? Well, alas, not everyone WAS finally able to see these momentous events — illness, domestic circumstances, inability to travel and other causes denied a small minority this once-in-a-life-time chance — and you will read later on in this issue of the appalling story of Edgar Lawson of Liscard, Wallasey, and in any case, the shows must be reported if only for posterity.

It was agony to put on a tie and tidy suit (as they say in Wales) in the prevailing heat of 90° plus but it had to be done; no casual dress for THIS event! We've got to mention the fantastic heat-wave. How can we not? The hottest, driest (don't we know!) the LONGEST for centuries and fate had decreed that Bing was going to undertake what would, in cool weather, be a demanding stint — and we are NOT, either, going to dwell on the fact that Bing is a septugenarian as so many other reviews did. We all know it well and we all know it made his efforts all that more astonishing — and admirable.

> Oxford Street and Argyll Street had a real Continental look that torrid, blazing-sun evening. People were on pavement cafe seats; shaded by gaily-coloured shades, busy with drinks and ice-creams . . . Two hours and more before the scheduled start of the show Argyll Street was full of people who just, it seemed, had gone to gaze on the phenomenon of a theatre that advertised, with life-sized picturers BING CROSBY AND FRIENDS. Cinema hoardings, cinema-fronts doing that for scores of films over the past 40 years was no novelty. The Palladium frontage certainly was! And people seemed to just want to gaze at it, perhaps taking in the unique, historic import of such a sight. Some indeed had the heinous thought of getting a screwdriver — and removing some of those magnificent pictures!

But now it was time to go inside; shaky hands withdrew the precious tickets and while we KNEW we hadn't left them at home 180 miles away it was good to see them!

> It is impossible to visit any show and not feel some excitement — even a village hall concert breeds an air of expectancy and the hum of anticipatory conversation is very evident. But this night! The atmosphere was not only heavy, it weighed upon one. . . .I was conscious of the people who had come from all points of Britain, by train, by bus, car . . . we of the ICC (large numbers of course) were busy greeting each other. There was no question of making your way expeditiously to your seet . . . here's Leslie Gaylor . . . and Bob Roberts, Eric Griffiths . . . Pat Forster, Bert Morton, the Reades — FROM AUSTRALIA! — John Dobson, Phil Clarke . . . but we can't go on name-dropping, yet it made one regretful that, because this tremendous event was spread over two weeks, we couldn't arrange a mammoth get-together to mark this incredible occasion.

Gathering one's programme! And what a programme — tho' that does it less than justice. That wonderful brochure . . . if some thought £1 was a bit steep for a *programme* they were quickly compensated when they realised what a beautifully-produced document they had received for just that, comparatively, small sum. Glossy, on best quality paper, measuring $13\frac{1}{2}$ x $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, with magnificent pictures in colour; record pictures, song-sheets, tributes to Bing, etc. etc. And of good enough quality, easily, to be mounted and framed. Knowing the cost of such things today it was the bargain of bargains. I noticed that further copies were available from International Entertainments at £1.25 post paid — and decided there and then I wouldn't stagger from the Palladium with 50 or so I had been asked to obtain from many members who wouldn't make it . . . mind, they didn't know what they were asking for when they made their requests! But sadly, I checked with the firm a day or two afterwards — and even by then all had been gone. . . .

> From those present on the first-night it seems the theatre was loaded with celebrities from show-business and there were few nights during that fortnight when that wasn't the case. I had the pleasure of a word with lovely Anne Shelton — still a tremendous fan and remembered as the girl who duetted in impromptu, yet astonishing fashion, with Bing on EASTER PARADE in 1944 . . . one was still shaking hands and saying "Hello" when, dead on time, the lights dimmed . . . and the excited hum of conversation died away to be replaced by an even more pregnant air of anticipation . . .

A Crosby quartet from the 1968
L - R Michael Crampton, Reg Bristo, Alf Farrow and Frank Murphy

Reg continued for some pages in similar vein, an even now, the combination of heat and excitement from that marvellous night comes through from his words.

So there we are, 100 editions of BING completed, and we look forward to our second century. At the present rate, number 200 should come up in 2024. It's a good job we've got some young members.

Malcolm Macfarlane

Lionel's Lines
What Would Shakespeare Have Said?

One of the pleasures of being editor of BING is to receive Lionel Pairpoint's regular feature — and its covering letter. Here by way of introduction, is a flavour of it.

"Yet another pint of blood! I'm running a sale of pieces of screwed-up paper — useful for stuffing cushions and that slight creaking that you hear, is my brain disintegrating. My God! There must be some hope — I can still spell disenntry — No — It's no use — it's gone again.

Seriously though, folks, I prepared a C90 tape, for my own reference, while writing this article — all the songs mentioned (and more) are included. I don't need the work but to give a 'kick start' to the economy — £3 to include p & p and a contribution to club funds."

I have drawn some criticism, in the past, for my habit of lacing my essays with quotations. A psychoanalyst might suggest that, being a naturally conciliatory sort of chap, I am deluding myself into believing that any controversial opinions which I may express, might be overlooked, if a personality shares the blame. Alternatively, it may well be that I am unconsciously attempting to persuade the reader that Socrates or Sartre only just beat me to the punch-line!

Anyway, my propensity for plagiarising the wisdom of others has finally caught up with me. In my last piece, for this magazine, I was rash enough to quote Voltaire — 'On ne doit aux mortes que la verite' (To the dead we owe only truth). Unfortunately, a printer's error converted 'mortes' to 'martes' (To any weasel-like carnivore of the genus Martes we owe only the truth) — it may be worth remembering for the next time that you find yourself rubbing shoulders with a ferret!

Well, stand by! Entirely unabashed, I am about to quote that eminent authority of the popular song — Mr. Green. Relax. It's not Benny (who, incidentally, never gave me any trouble) but Abel, sometime editor of 'Variety', who is recorded as saying, "I think songwriters have the greatest obituaries in the world., When a songwriter dies, the minute you read the list of songs he wrote, you start to identify with him . . . People read the obit and they respond, 'Oh!, My God, he wrote *that*, I remember the first time I heard that song, I was at a dance with a girl . . . '. To remember what each of his songs did to you is like running through the chapters of your autobiography".

I never heard the valediction for the man I am writing about, who died in 1964 but it may have mentioned that one of his earliest hits was 'My Very Good Friend The Milkman' and one of his last, 'Misty'.

What may be of more significance to readers of this magazine is that, in between, he wrote the lyrics for no less than 23 Bing Crosby films at Paramount, at the same time, furnishing with the words of 45 songs which made the Top Twenty in the music charts between 1936 and 1949.

What Would Shakespeare Have Said" — Bing, Mary Martin and the words of . . . ?

There are only brief mentions of him in the reference works which are available to me, although one can find a great deal regarding his three chief, musical collaborators — Arthur Johnston, Jimmy Monaco and Jimmy Van Heusen. So, please forgive me if I paraphrase one of his lyrics and say, 'This is the last time you'll hear their names' making one brief exception, however, for Jimmy Van Heusen and offer an extraordinary sentence which appears in 'The Melody Lingers On — The Great Songwriters and Their Movie Musicals' by Ray Hemmings and which, once again, illustrates the familiar disregard for the lyricist's contribution to popular music — "Among the requirements that Crosby made to Van Heusen: that the songs not be too sophisticated or too sentimental"!!?

Make no mistake. Our man wasn't Cole Porter or Lorenz Hart. His lyrics were more ingenuous than ingenious and he was up to the top of his wellies in philosophical sentimentality. Whereas most lyricists were rquired to write 'I love you' in 32 bars, it seemed that his commission, in every Bing film was to write 'I'm flat broke but what a *beautiful* day! in 32 bars!

There have been lofty hypotheses that the songs were born of the Depression and caught on because the sentiment that they conveyed matched the mood of the public at the time. I would discount this theory and believe they were deliberately designed to consolidate and perpetuate Bing's screen persona as the happy-go-lucky, footloose minstrel. Even some of the 'professional' men that he played during this period — the doctor, the captain of industry and to some extent, the priest, had more than a touch of the 'rolling stone' in their fictional backgrounds.

From 'Pocketfull Of Dreams'; 'I Haven't Time To Be A Millionaire' through 'Ain't Got A Dime To My Name'; 'It's Anybody's Spring', up until 1950, when he was still singing, " . . . and all the millionaires' money, couldn't buy a better abode, than my Someplace on Anywhere Road", Bing ably demonstrated this songsmith's talent for what Sammy Cahn calls 'singability' — "Once I have written a song and considered all the pros and cons of the lyric, the uppermost and final consideration is, does it sing? and not only sing but sing effortlessly".

Some measure of his contribution to the screen repertoire of Bing Crosby, during his most popular Hollywood years, may be judged by the fact that no less than 88 of the titles which appear on the 'Bing's Hollywood' series of albums can be attributed to him.

But apart from these, Bing rarely missed the opportunity of using one of his numbers, even when they were not featured in his own film. One of the earliest and most significant was 'What's New?' which Bing recorded twice. This one-sided, lover's dialogue, set to music by Bob Haggart, has gained a place in the top 100 most recorded songs and is singled out by Alex Wilder for its "wonderful conversational lyrics",. in 'American Popular Song — The Great Innovators 1900-1950'.

A big hit from the same year was 'Scatterbrain' and there are two examples of Bing singing this bouncy little foxtrot (Hands up, all those who can still foxtrot!) from the Kraft Music Hall. Typically, Bing makes things just a wee bit awkward for himself in the first version (16.11.39) by inserting an extra word:

> 'You're as pleasant as the morning
> And (as) refreshing as the rain . . . '

It is noticeable that in the later version (4.1.40) that he overcomes this self-imposed obstacle by dispensing with both of the words that precede 'refreshing'!

Our lyricist displayed a strong affinity for 'Moon' songs. Without digging too deeply, I can find fifteen titles in his portfolio which mention 'Moon'. It got in his eyes, it was a bosom companion of the willow tree, it came over Madison Square, we were advised not to let it get away and practically everyone, except Bing, seems to have had a whack at 'Polka Dots And Moonbeams' but to his credit, I cannot discover that he ever succummbed to rhyming it with 'June'.

Lesser heard examples of the genre include 'Got The Moon In My Pocket', written for the film 'My Favourite Spy' — not the Bob Hope vehicle but an earlier movie from RKO, featuring Kay Kyser. Bing recorded this song on the 16th March 1942 and so far as I am aware, it has only been re-issued once on microgroove, on a now, long deleted EP. It brims with rhyme — 'Seven **sharp**, my magic **carp-et** will be **set** to leave . . . ' and fits Bing's up-tempo mode, like a glove.

There are two versions of 'Oh! You Crazy Moon'. Fortunately, taped copies exist of the only time that Bing sang this for Kraft on the 5th October 1939 and we also have, from a privately produced album, the unissued master (L4729A), recorded on the 24th December, 1947. Was the finished product really not worthy of issue or was it considered passé, having already been a hit for Tommy Dorsey, some 8 years previously?

The film 'London Town' should have had everything going for it, — Gorgeous girls, Technicolour, Sid Field, a top American songwriting team and an American director but it only proved that Britain could still make poor musicals, even with outside help. However, two popular songs emerged from the score, 'My Heart Goes Crazy' and 'So Would I'. Both were recorded by Bing on the 22nd August 1946. Of the two, my sentimental soul prefers the wistful strains of 'So Would I' and enjoys its sole appearance on radio from the Philco Show of 26th February 1947.

One of his later hits, from the Fifties, made four appearances on Bing's last major radio series for General Electric. A big seller for Perry Como, 'Wild Horses' was adapted from Robert Schumann's stirring 'Wilder Reiter' with words written under his pseudonym, K.C.Rogan.

Radio transcriptions also provided glimpses of some of the 'lost' songs from Bing's movies — 'For What?' (Road To Rio) is duetted with Bob Hope, (as was originally intended) on Philco Radio Time (18.6.47) and 'Get Yourself A Phonograph' (The Emperor Waltz) from the Lux Radio Theatre (26.9.49). Further examples from various sources which have bobbed to the surface, in recent years are, 'Where Is Central Park?' (Sing You Sinners), 'Beware' (Rhythm On The River) and 'Kinda Peculiar Brown' (Dixie — deleted from the print shown in this country).

I assume that he may have been classified as, 'one of the Hollywood hacks', according to an imperceptive observation of screen songwriters which recently came to my attention. If so, as a writer of lyrics, he would have been in distinguished company, running a close fourth to Mack Gordon, Leo Robin and Johnny Mercer. No one would claim that it was *all* deathless verse but it is far easier to sneer than to set words to music and somewhere in his work which occupies so many pages in Bing's catalogue, there will be a memory for someone — 'Humpty Dumpty Heart', 'Between A Kiss And A Sigh', 'Let's All Meet At My House', 'A Friend Of Yours', 'Like Someone In Love', 'Devil May Care', 'Imagination', 'It Could Happen To You', 'Early American' — I could go on but I am certain that I have already mentioned at least one that you have a soft spot for and may have overlooked that you were listening to this man's words.

You may have noticed that I have not revealed the songwriter's name. Even so, I have the feeling that most of you will be way ahead of me but just in cse somebody 'nodded off' after the first paragraph, let Bing's own words supply the denouement — "Everybody used to call him 'The Poet' because the lyrics he wrote were really quite poetic, for popular songs — Johnny Burke was a great man."

Letter from Leslie

There aren't too many people on the Crosby scene who can claim to have already been a household name when BING started out on its journey to 100. Leslie Gaylor however was promoting Bing with the same gusto then to as now. Over to your, Leslie.

Over the Christmas period, it was really wonderful to listen to the many Crosby recordings broadcast from the various record stations. Being one of those people who enjoys radio more than television, I am able to confirm that ol' Bing gets a really good share of air time on the local and national stations.

All this ties up with reports and taped copies of Bing 'radio plays' which I regularly receive from my old friend Stan White. Its a delight to see the relationship which Stan has built up with so many local stations. Likewise, American member Ernest Sutkowski does so much for Bing on station WRTN in New York. He has three programmes each week, very ably presented by his son, Joe Francis.

In the last issue of BING, I noted the write up by Pete Cakanic about Bing and the Vietnam war. This immediately reminded me that during the time of that war, I read in one of the newspapers that Bing and Kathryn were in London. The very next day I headed for London and just simply took a chance that I would get to see Bing at whatever hotel he was staying at.

My first thoughts were to head for The Savoy and it was there that I had my first stroke of luck. At the Reception Desk, they confirmed "Yes, Mr. Crosby is staying here, but he's out at the moment and will be back in a short while." I took up a 'waiting position' outside the Hotel and within no time, a taxi drew up and out stepped Bing and Kathryn.

Bing spotted me and as we shook hands, he said "Would you like some tea Leslie?" Naturally I accepted and the three of us sat downstairs at a small table and Bing ordered some tea and light snacks. During the conversation, Kathryn said to Bing "Don't forget Bing, you have to go to Vietnam." I was amazed that in my presence, Bing spoke a little sharply to Kathryn and said to her "You can go, I'm not". It certainly seemed to me that Bing was not in favour of the war.

Speaking of Kathryn reminds me of something else that Ken Barnes once told me. One of his good friends was at an auction of "Bing's things" which Kathryn organised at Butterfields in San Francisco in 1982. He overheard Kathryn say to someone "Let someone else dust it off!". And just to complete my reminiscences of Kathryn, one of my most prized possessions is a copy of her book "My Life With Bing". Frank Smith, then a New York Supreme Court Judge, bought two copies in New York in 1983 when Kathryn was in attendance, autographing copies. She signed mine "To Leslie Gaylor — Bing's special friend." Thanks a million, Frank.

I had many cards over Christmas which mentioned my little slot on the BBC Television Programme "Primetime". Transmission was on 14 December and seemed to interest many people outside the ICC. Regrettably, there was a lot of material edited out because of the time factor. This included a video recording made at the BBC by record producer, Ken Barnes. Ken would have been featured talking about some of the album projects on which we collaborated. Nevertheless, the 6½ minutes they transmitted nationwide created a lot of interest and for a few days, the phone never stopped ringing.

Member James Dineen up there in Scotland saw the broadcast and spotted a superb 12" x 10" photograph which he kindly gifted to me some years ago. It was taken by his son at Gleneagles and shows Bing with racing driving Jackie Stewart, Sean Connery and Phil Harris — dated 22 August 1976. Its a super photograph and I'm grateful to James for the pleasure it has given me over the years.

Judging by all the mail I have received, the new video on Bing has been particularly well received. I particularly like Bing's masterly rendition of "I Left My Heart In San Francisco". Bryan Johnson, who produced the video, is a friend of Ken Barnes. Ken has recorded a piece for insertion in Volume 2 and has also sent Bryan a copy of Bing's Oslo concert.

One of my Christmas cards last year was from Roy Williams of Readers Digest. Roy is one of the many Bing contacts I have made over the years and he designs layouts for RD brochures. In his card, Roy stated that there would be something forthcoming from RD which would be of interest to Bing fans. Naturally, I tried to find out more and Roy did tell me that what was planned was **not** records. As soon as I hear anymore I will of course pass it on.

Before closing, I would like to say how saddened I was by the passing of Rene Chester. She was one of our most enthusiastic members. My condolences go to all members of her family. We shall all miss her.

Leslie Gaylor

BING AT THE PALACE

During the lifetime of BING, we have seen much original research on Bing's radio, film and recording work. So far, television has remained as perhaps, "the final frontier". Now, Malcolm Macfarlane begins the first chronicling of Bing on the smaller screen, with Bing's Hollywood Palace career.

As previously mentioned, the ICC is gradually putting together a list of Bing's many appearances on television. We gave details of Bing's weekly sitcom series in BING 98 and this brought forth a tremendous amount of information from Jean-Paul Frereault which has filled many gaps, including most of the missing titles of the sitcom shows. Using data originally supplied by Eric Griffiths and now supplemented by Jean-Paul, we shall be looking at Bing's performances at the Hollywood Palace in this edition. It is hoped to start the main listing of Bing's TV outings in the August issue of BING.

The Hollywood Palace series of shows ran each winter season from January 1964 to February 1970 and it came into being almost by chance. During the winter 1963/64 TV season, ABC presented a 2 hour live Saturday night show starring Jerry Lewis. This proved to be an expensive flop and the ABC heads cancelled it and gave producer Nick Vanoff two weeks to make good. He came up with the format of an old style vaudeville evening presented from the ABC Palace Theatre in Hollywood. Each show had a wide variety of acts which were introduced by a celebrity master of ceremonies. The MCs were rotated and Bing appeared 32 times over the 7 seasons in which the show was televised. The guests seen on the shows read like a veritable "Who's Who" of Show Business. Bing usually starred in the opening show of each season and members may be interested to see the programme given to the studio audience at the opening show of the 1967 season which is shown below. This programme was originally reproduced in the Crosby Collector and we gratefully acknowledge our source.

the HOLLYWOOD PALACE
FOR
PRESENTATION ON ABC-TV
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1967
PROGRAM
NOTE: The position which an act is allotted on the program does not in the least reflect upon its merit. When a bill is made up almost exclusively of headliners — a frequent occurrence at the Hollywood Palace — every number is worthy of the "star spot" on ordinary vaudeville bills. It is only fair to the artist, therefore, to judge his work solely upon its merits.
SINGING IN A NEW SEASON WITH
OUR HOST BING CROSBY
IN THE BLUE OF A TUESDAY NIGHT
JIMMY DURANTE & MILTON BERLE
HELPING BING OPEN A 5th
THE ASSOCIATION They Found Room At The Top Of The Charts
OUR 1st NIGHT LEADING LADY DIAHANN CARROLL
Timber-r-r-r! DURANTE - CROSBY - BERLE
JIMMY WINS BY A WOODEN INDIAN'S NOSE
Dancing For Your En-Joey-Ment JOEY HEATHERTON
"Girl Talk" BING - DIAHANN - JOEY
HARRY TRIES TO GET A WORD IN
RAVI SHANKAR MASTER OF THE SITAR
THE SOUND THAT ROCKED THE MUSIC WORLD
3-STAR PERFORMERS BING - JIMMY - MILTON A 3-Star Performance
OUR HOST SINGS DOWN THE CURTAIN
BUT BING'LL BE BACK!
Mitchell Ayres AND THE Hollywood Palace Orchestra
A ZODIAC PRODUCTION
Executive Producer - NICK VANOFF
Producer - WILLIAM O. HARBACH

Each show took 3 days of Bing's time and these were described as a day of consultation, a day of rehearsal and a day of shooting. No-one would claim that this was Bing at his peak, but the shows do contain some interesting performances with highlights such as his versions of "The Men In My Little Girl's Life" and "Love's Been Good To Me". The beginnings of the routines used at the Palladium can be seen in the medleys with Ella Fitzgerald and with Frank Sinatra Jnr. Also the Palladium versions of "Them There Eyes" and "My Cup Runneth Over" can be traced back to the Palace shows. All in all therefore, the series is an important part of Crosbyana. Press reports in 1967 suggested that Bing was receiving $12500 per show which was a lot of money at that time (and it doesn't seem too bad now!).

The shows were not shown in the UK although they were seen in Australia. Comment from 'down-under' was that the first few seasons of the shows were of poor picture quality due to the technique used at the time of filming the original video-tape recordings. (Here in Britain we too suffered then from many poor quality American TV variety shows for the same reason.). Technical advances soon enabled video-tape to be used in Australia and the final seasons of the Hollywood Palace shows were of much better picture quality. Many of us have audio tapes of some of the shows and it is unfortunate that some of the acts were visual items (e.g. jugglers and magicians) which makes listening to the whole show a little boring. Ideally it is best to edit the Bing items out of the shows on to a separate tape and it is then quite entertaining. It is pleasing to note that video tapes of the shows are now appearing in the USA and we look forward to seeing these in due course.

The list which follows shows only Bing's involvement for reasons of space. Mitchell Ayres And His Orchestra provided the musical accompaniment to all of the shows but the one of 3rd January 1970 and are not therefore included in the listing to save repetition. Any corrections or amendments which members care to offer would be welcome and we thank Lionel Pairpoint for helping us with correct titles of songs etc.

1 **4th January, 1964**
Guests: Mickey Rooney, Nancy Wilson, Gary Crosby and Bob Newhart. Bing sings:-
* Teamwork (with Gary Crosby)
* Climb Ev'ry Mountain (with The Young Americans)

2 **13th September, 1964**
Guests: Mickey Rooney, Jimmy Dean, Connie Stevens and Kathy Nolan.
* On ABC This Coming Year (with chorus)
* Play A Simple Melody (with Mickey Rooney, Sammy Jackson, Tony Franciosa, Richard Basehart and David Hedison)
* Style (with David Jannsen and Mickey Rooney)
* The Beer Barrel Polka (with Jimmy Dean plus Lawrence Welk on accordion)

3 **16th January, 1965**
Guests: Beverly Garland, George Burns and the King Family
* There's More To Life Than Just Living
* She Can Carry A Gun (with George Burns and Ed Wynn)
* Dream (with the King Family)
* To Banana (with Frank McHugh, reprised with Frank McHugh and Beverly Garland)
* Happy Birthday, To You (with entire company)

4 **18th September, 1965**
Guests: Caterina Valente, The Nitwits, Jack Burns and Tim Conway
* On The Hollywood Palace This Coming Year
* Medley with Caterina Valente (Fancy Meeting You Here, On A Slow Boat To China, it Happened In Monterey, Hindustan, On A Slow Boat To China)

5 **25th September, 1965**
Guests: Louis Armstrong, Phil Harris, and The Young Americans
* My Blue Heaven
* Happiness Is (with the Young Americans)
* Dardanella (with Louis Armstrong)
* South Rampart Street Parade (with Phil Harris and Louis Armstrong)

6 **20th November, 1965**
Guests: Bob Hope, Diahann Carroll, The Kessler Twins and John Bubbles
* Them There Eyes
* Identical (with the Kessler Twins)
* Medley with John Bubbles (Bing's contribution: You Can Dramatise The Feeling With A Hat, Red Sails In The Sunset, In A Little Spanish Town, Prisoner Of Love, London Bridge Is Falling Down, Old Devil Moon, You Go To My Head, Me And My Shadow, You Can Dramatise the Feeling With A Hat)
* Count Your Blessings

7 **25th December, 1965**
Guests: Dorothy Collins and Fred Waring And His Pennsylvanians
* White World Of Winter
* Whiffenpoof Song (with Fred Waring And His Pennsylvanians)
* Glow Worm (parody — with Dorothy Collins)
* Medley with Fred Waring And His Pennsylvanians (Bing sings: It's Christmas Time Again, Go Tell It On The Mountain)
* We Wish You The Merriest (with Dorothy Collins and Bob Crane)
* White Christmas

8 **1st January, 1966**
Guests: Danny Thomas, Bob Newhart, Sonny & Cher, Donna Butterworth
* This Could Be The Start Of Something Big
* My Little Grass Shack In Kealakekua, Hawaii (with Donna Butterworth)
* Have You Made Your Resolutions (with Sonny & Cher)
* High Hopes

9 **19th February, 1966**
Guests: Gary Crosby, Rosemary Clooney and Edgar Bergen
* Just The Way You Are (includes a snatch of "Stay As Sweet As You Are")
* Medley with Rosemary Clooney (Hear That Band, The Daughter of Molly Malone, Poor People Of Paris, New Vienna Woods, Hear That Band

10 **26th March, 1966**
Guests: David Frost, Nanette Fabray, Jackie Mason and Tammy Grimes
* When The Red Red Robin
* Typically English (with Tammy Grimes)
* The Men In My Little Girl's Life
* Medley with Nanette Fabray (If You Wanna Learn Your History, B-U-Ug, Greensleeves, How Many Ways (English Country Garden), Quartet from Rigoletto (parody), Tell Me Pretty Maiden, Indian Love Call, Baby It's Cold Outside, B-U-Ug.)

11 **21st May, 1966**
Guests: Johnny Mercer, Shelley Berman, The King Family and Leslie Uggams
* This Is One Of Those Songs
* Medley with Johnny Mercer (Bing's contribution: From Monday On, Three Little Words, Witchcraft, Chattanooga Choo Choo, A Shine On Your Shoes, 3 O'Clock In The Morning, Yes We Have No Bananas, Lazy River, Manana, Winter Wonderland, Take Me Out To The Ball Game, Love Me Or Leave Me, Russian Lullaby, Manhattan, The Night They Invented Champagne, Shoo-Fly Pie And Apple Pan Dowdy, Miss America, What A Difference A Day Made, New York New York, Margie, Diga Diga Doo, Something's Gotta Give)
* Young At Heart/You Make Me Feel So Young (with The King Family)

12 **17th September, 1966**
Guests: George Burns, Sid Caesar, Jane Marsh, Mamas And The Papas
* Strike Up The Band
* You're Nobody Till Somebody Loves You (with George Burns)

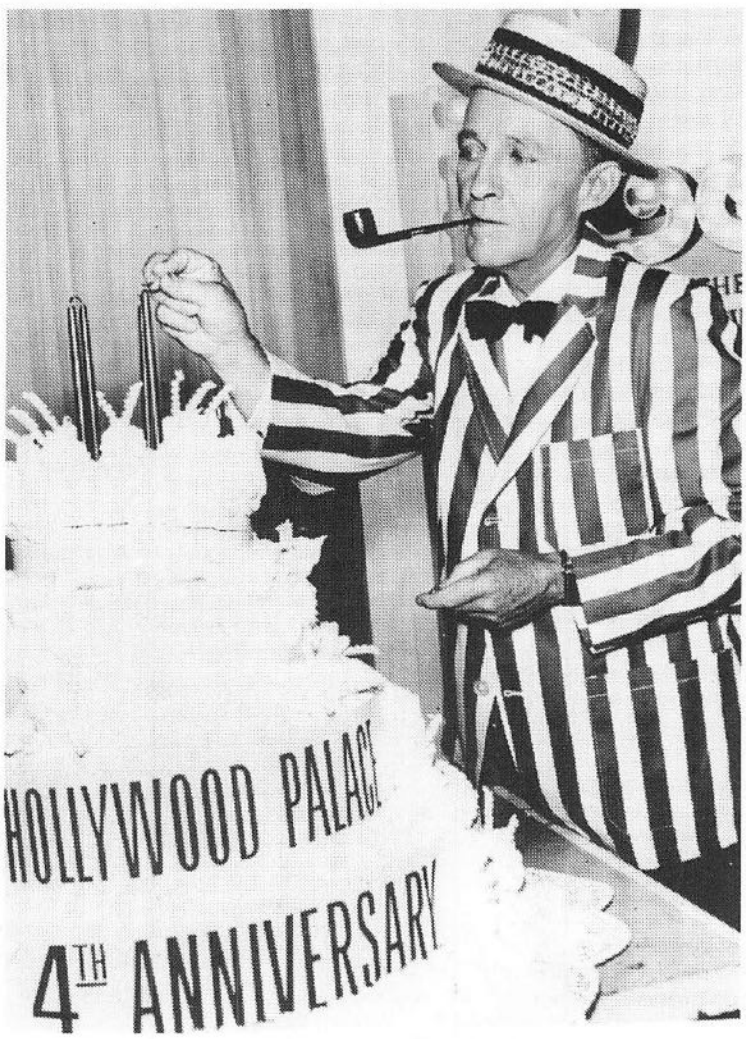
13 **26th November, 1966**
Guests: Dorothy Lamour, Sid Caesar, Vikki Carr
* Mame
* Medley with Dorothy Lamour (Bing's contribution: Road To Morocco (parody), Moonlight Becomes You, You Don't Have To Know The Language, But Beautiful, Apalachicola FLA, Sunday Monday Or Always, Road To Morocco)
* Sunrise Sunset

The dancing Bing — September 17, 1966

14 **24th December, 1966**
Guests: Kate Smith, Cyd Charisse, Crosby Family, Bob Newhart
* It's That Time Of Year (includes snatch of "Happy Holiday")
* Medley with Kate Smith (Way To Get Ready For Winter, Jingle Bells, Sleigh Ride, Winter Wonderland)
* Medley with Crosby Family (Bing's contribution; Silver Bells, Do You Hear What I Hear (this is sung alongside Kathryn singing Little Drummer Boy), What Do You Want For Christmas, Twelve Days Of Christmas, Silver Bells)
* White Christmas.

15 **31st December 1966**
Guests: Mills Brothers, Skitch Henderson, Charles Aznavour and Dorothy Collins
* Cabaret
* Paper Doll (with Mills Brothers)
* Medley with guests featuring Bing in:
— Mame (with cast)
— So Much In Love (with Dorothy Collins)
— Somewhere My Love (solo) (Lara's Theme)
— Winchester Cathedral (solo)
— Strangers In The Night (with Mills Brothers & Charles Aznavour)
— That's Life (with Dorothy Collins/cast)

16 **14th January 1967**
Guests: Jimmy Durante, Bob Hope, Edie Adams and Senator Dirksen
* Put On A Happy Face
* Paper Doll (re-run of Bing fluffing the verse when recording the 31/12/66 show)



Bing lights the 4th Birthday Cake — January, 1967

* Sing Soft, Sing Sweet, Sing Gentle (with Jimmy Durante)
* Happy Birthday/Inka Dinka Doo (with Jimmy Durante and Bob Hope)
* This Is A Great Country

17 **18th February, 1967**
Guests: Ella Fitzgerald, the Nitwits, Alice Faye and Phil Harris
* Them Was The Good Old Days
* Medley With Ella Fitzgerald (Bing joins in: London Bridge Is Falling Down, Row Row Row Your Boat, Three Blind Mice, Frere Jacques, A-Tisket A-Tasket, London Bridge Is Falling Down, Row Row Row Your Boat)
* Medley with Phil Harris & Alice Faye (K-K-Katie, Hello Frisco Hello, Has Anybody Here Seen Kelly, Grizzly Bear, Hug Up Close To Your Baby, Alexander's Ragtime Band)

18 **1st April, 1967**
Guests: Louis Armstrong, Washboard Three, Red Buttons and Nanette Fabray
*This Is The Life For Me
* (My Girl Loves) Cheesecake (with Louis Armstrong — Bing's involvement limited to a few words)
* Medley with Louis Armstrong (Let's Sing Like A Dixieland Band, Muskrat Ramble, Let's Sing Like A Dixieland Band)

19 **13th May, 1967**
Guests: Frances Langford, Barbara McNair, Louise Nye, The King Family and Don Ameche
* A Cock-Eyed Optimist
* Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home
* Medley with Frances Langford & Don Ameche (You Brought Us The Phone, Alexander's Ragtime Band (parody), Darling Je Vous Aime Beaucoup, Hello Frisco Hello, Frere Jacques (parody), All Alone)

20 **5th September, 1967**
Guests: Jimmy Durante, Milton Berle, Ravi Shankar, Joey Heatherton & Diahann Carroll
* Altogether In The Fall
* Girl Talk (with Joey Heatherton & Diahann Carroll)
* That's Where My Money Goes (cappella — short extract only)
* Swinging On A Star (with Diahann Carroll & Joey Heatherton)
* There's No Business Like Show Business (verse only)/ To Be A Performer (with entire cast)

21 **31st October, 1967**
Guests: Victor Borge, Roger Miller, Gail Martin & Paul Lynde
* It's A Small World After All (with U.N. Children's Choir)
* Medley with Roger Miller (Bing's involvement: My Heart Is A Hobo, Second Hand Rose (parody), King Of The Road, Ain't Got A Dime To My Name, Brother Can You Spare a Dime, Engine Engine No. 9, My Heart Is a Hobo)
* I Dig Rock And Roll Music (with Victor Borge, Roger Miller and Paul Lynde)
* Medley with Gail Martin (Bing's involvement: You Make Me Feel So Young, My Favourite Things, Lollipops And Roses, Mutual Admiration Society, That's Amore (parody), You Make Me Feel So Young)
* My Cup Runneth Over

22 **19th December, 1967**
Guests: The King Family, Louis Nye, Adam West and the Crosby Family
* Talk To The Animals (with Kathryn Crosby & the children)
* The Violin Song (with lady plus Kathryn Crosby & the children)
* The Fire (with King Family)
* Children's Marching Song (with Louis Nye, Adam West & children)
* Beautiful People Like You
* White Christmas

23 **13th January, 1968**
Guests: Peggy Lee, Jimmy Durante, Phil Harris & Milton Berle
* Step To The Rear
* Go Go Gonzaga
* Medley with Peggy Lee (Bing's involvement: So Good To See You, Do I Hear A Waltz, Something Stupid,A Doodling Song, I Can Sing A Rainbow, Where The Blue Of The Night, Yellow Bird, So Good To See You)
* Step To The Rear (with entire cast)

24 **20th April, 1968**
Recorded; 1st March, 1968
Guests: Sid Caesar, King Sisters, Florence Henderson & Joe Bushkin
* Simon Says
* Medley with Joe Bushkin (Bing's involvement: Talk To The Animals, The Aba Daba Honeymoon, Donkey Serenade, Mairzy Doats, Three Little Fishes, How Much is That Doggie In The Window, Talk To The Animals)
* Medley with Florence Henderson (There Are All Kinds Of Strings, I've Got The World On A String,, I'll String Along With You, Holiday For Strings, Zing Went The Strings Of My Heart, No Strings)
* Where The Rainbow Ends

25 **28th September, 1968**
Guests: Bobby Goldsboro, Sid Caesar, Jeannie C. Riley & Abby Lincoln.
* If You're Looking For A Man
* Medley with Jeannie C. Riley & Bobby Goldsboro
(Nashville Cats, Gentle On My Mind, Little Green Apples, Hold Me Tight)

26 **21st December, 1968**
Guests: The Crosby Family, John Beyner, Lennon Sisters, Glen Campbell
* This Is That Time Of Year
* When The Kids Get Married (with Kathryn Crosby)
* 1432 Franklin Pike Circle Hero (with Glen Campbell)
* Medley with family (Bing's involvement: White Christmas, Do You Hear What I Hear, Silent Night, We Wish You A Merry Christmas)

27 **4th January, 1969**
Guests: Tiny Tim, Judy Carne and Bobbie Gentry
* Once A Year Day
* Happy Anniversary
* Oklolona River Bottom Band (with Bobbie Gentry)
* Medley with Tiny Tim (Down The Old Ox Road, Please, Love Is Just Around The Corner, I Love You Samantha, True Love (also with Bobbie Gentry)
* In The Cool Cool Cool Of The Evening (with Tiny Tim & Bobbie Gentry)
* The Straight Life
* Little Green Apples

28 **1st March, 1969**
Recorded 18th February, 1969
Guests: Victor Borge, Frank Sinatra Jnr., Gary Crosby and The Temptations
* Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da
* My Girl (with the Temptations)
* Row Row Row Your Boat (with Frank Sinatra Jnr & Gary Crosby)
* Fugue For Tinhorns (with Frank Sinatra Jnr & Gary Crosby)
* Hey Jude (with Gary Crosby)

29 **5th April, 1969**
Recorded 19th March, 1969
Guests: Philip Crosby, Shelley Berman, The Four Tops & Sally Ann Howes
* Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (with Sally Ann Howes)
* Medley with Philip Crosby (Sam's Song, When You And I Were Young Maggie Play A Simple Melody)
* Medley with Sally Ann Howes (Bing's contribution: Let's All Go Down The Strand, I've Got A Lovely Bunch Of Coconuts, Any Old Iron, I'm Henry The Eighth I Am, Underneath The Arches, With A Little Bit Of Luck)
* Both Sides Now

30 **11th October, 1969**
Recorded 29th/30th September, 1969
Guests: Engelbert Humperdinck, Bobbie Gentry, Dick Shawn, & Gwen Verdon
* Here We Go Again
* Put A Little Love In Your Heart (with Bobbie Gentry)
* Beatles Medley
— Yellow Submarine (with Engelbert Humperdink)
— Can't Buy Me Love (ditto)
— And I Love Her
— Ob-la-di, Ob-la-da
* Love's Been Good To Me

31 **3rd January, 1970**
Guests: Mary Costa, Sergio Franchi, the Establishment, Leland Palmer and the Nick Perito Orchestra
* This Is The Life For Me
* Pollution (with Mary Costa)
* Medley of Bing's hits with cast (Bing takes part in:
Love Is Just Around The Corner, Please, Learn To Croon, Down The Old Ox Road, The Waiter And The Porter And The Upstairs Maid, Pennies From Heaven, Swinging On A Star)

32 **7th February, 1970**
The final show in the series comprising flashbacks from earlier shows. Bing narrates and sings the following at the beginning and end of the show:
* Until You've Played The Palace.

(Editor: Eric Griffiths painstakingly edited all of Bing's songs from the series on to tape to help us in putting this listing together. From his tapes, we have compiled a C90 cassette "Hollywood Palace Highlights" which is available from George Harwood, 5 Glebe Road., Hemingford Grey, Huntingdon, Cambs PE18 9DS — tel 0480 63680. Price £3.50 inc. p. & p. to UK members. The ICC will receive £1 for each cassette sold.)

The Sun Is Shining, The Grass Is Green . . .

BING is not the only one with a birthday to celebrate. Stan White looks back at the 50th anniversary of the most famous of all Crosby songs.

May 29th 1992, marks the 50th anniversary of the original recording session at the Decca Studios in Los Angeles, which produced the best known popular record in the world, "White Christmas", music and words by Irving Berlin, sung by Bing Crosby and the Ken Darby Singers with Orchestra arranged and conducted by John Scott Trotter. The Studio Matrix Number for the issued "take" is — DLA 3009-B, published information about the recording date tells us that there was an unissued "A" take, and Steve Hoffman of MCA in 1986 mentioned a "C" take. He also said that none of the metal parts (masters) from that recording session are now useable, they are either lost (scrapped) or too badly worn to be used again. Little doubt exists that due to wartime conditions, not enough care was taken of the original master as it was being used to produce "Mother Masters" which were supplied to record pressing plants around the world to meet the demands for this record, which sold million after million from this particular master, until 1947.

At this point it is worth mentioning that at Midnight on December 31st (Thursday) 1992, this record recorded on May 29th 1942, will fall from recording copyright protection, which will allow anyone to then release it. Of course, this applies to Matrix DLA 3009-B only, and the copyright fee for the music is still in force, and will be until 50 years after the death of Irving Berlin, who died on September 22nd 1989 at the age of 101.

An interesting thing happened as far as record collectors are concerned, when due to the wartime paper shortage, English Decca pressed some considerable number of "White Christmas", using the Red Decca Classical Music Label, instead of the normal Black and Gold Brunswick label. The label information was the same except that the Decca label has "B M" above the normal Brunswick Catalogue number — 03384, and just the same as the Brunswick 78 rpm pressings, "White Christmas" is the "B" side to, "Let's Start The New Year Right", which has Bing accompanied by the Bob Crosby Orchestra. Surely the most famous "B" side ever!

The "A" and "B" side choice was made at American Decca, probably after consultation with the makers of the film, "Holiday Inn", in which the songs, "White Christmas" and "Let's Start The New Year Right" were featured, along with, "Happy Holiday", "Plenty To Be Thankful For", "I'll Capture Your Heart", "Be Careful It's My Heart" and "Abraham" (the film was made in 1942). The film itself was a holiday story rather than a Christmas one, and the choice of, "Let's Start The New Year Right" as the "A" side was an excellent one because it is one of Irving Berlin's best. Nobody in that May of 1942 could have known of the impact that the song, "White Christmas", was going to have all over the world as a symbol of home and well being, as families were split up as men and women were sent to far distant lands to fight the enemy in World War Two, added to which it was introduced by the best loved popular singer the world has ever known.

By Christmas of 1946, Bing's Decca recording of the song had sold about 7 million copies worldwide, and soon after that Christmas in the knowledge that the Bing version of the song would continue to sell, it became obvious at American Decca that they had problems looming because of the badly worn metal master. So the decision was taken, easily I imagine, to have Bing, The Ken Darby Singers and The John Scott Trotter Orchestra, re-record the song as near as possible to the 1942 arrangement. The new recording was made on March 19th 1947 and the Studio Matrix Number was L4374-A. There are differences to the original, but to the casual listener these would not be apparent, and this is the version which was used from then onwards to the present day. It has been re-released many times around the world as a 78 rpm record, as a 45 rpm single, on Extended Play 45s, and then on many compilation LPs of Christmas songs — some of them all of Bing, many with other artistes singing Christmas songs, plus ordinary albums featuring a mixture of songs sung by Bing. There have been quite a lot of cassette releases featuring the song, a reel to reel tape or two in the 1950s/60s before cassette, and now the whole thing is being repeated on CD releases. It would not surprise me to find the recording being used on the Digital Compact Cassettes due out in 1992, in the Spring. It will simply have to be on a DCC release by next Christmas, probably via Pickwick for one Company who will make big use of DCC.

As I have stated, the 1942 recording will be up-for-grabs by anyone wishing to use it for Christmas 1993 onwards. It will mean copying from the original shellac 78 rpm pressings. Some of the pressings, especially the later ones, have quite a lot of surface noice, but with the modern method of removing such unwanted

noises, it will be done. Some of the pressings done on the English Decca Red and White Classical label, because the paper supply for the Brunswick label had been used up, are quite good with the surface noise at a minimum.

Lots of stories are around concerning the song. For instance, it might shock some Crosby enthusiasts who know me, to learn that the first version of, "White Christmas" I ever purchased was the one by Frank Sinatra! I have no way of knowing whether Bing really did take his pipe from his mouth on the set of film, Holiday Inn, and say to Irving Berlin "Irving, you have no need to worry about that one" — he might have done. Equally, as Lionel Pairpoint said to me in a letter, "Did Bing sing 'White Christmas' on Kraft in the Christmas Show of 1941? (It seems fairly certain that he sang, 'Let's Start The New Year Right' the following week) — The song was not published until May 6th 1942, just over 3 weeks before Bing recorded it." I think he must have done because the story originates from someone remembering hearing the programme. The situation would be that Irving Berlin had completed these songs for the film, and asked Bing to try them out. The publishing date does not matter as the copyright became Berlin's as the music and words went on to paper.

Of course the question that everyone asks is, "How many copies of Bing's version of, 'White Christmas' have been sold over the years". In a letter to Charles Baillie of Arcadia, California, dated November 5th 1991 from Andy McKaie, Vice President, Catalog Development & Special Markets A & R (MCA), Mr. McKaie wrote the following: "No, no one at MCA has had the time or energy to thoroughly canvas the untold sales of Bing's "White Christmas". The total would be amazing, I'm sure." (MCA now own the Decca Archives). It is now widely thought that the total sales from all sources and in all formats for Bing's 1942 and 1947 recordings are in the region of 90 to 100 millions; with more to come. No true record can ever be calculated once DLA 3009 is up for grabs.

* * * * * *

Thanks, Stan. 50 years since White Christmas was recorded. It hardly seems possible. We have had our attention drawn to the following entry in the 1991 Guinness Book of Records.

"WHITE CHRISTMAS. Bing Crosby's version. From the original recording of 29/5/42. By June 1987, the North American sales alone had reached 170,884,207 copies."

Lional Pairpoint, in correspondence with Stan (each was trying to persuade the other to write the White Christmas article) commented on this as follows:

"Sales of 170 million in North America alone would mean that every second man, woman and child in the United States and Canada has bought a copy. I can't vouch for this but I've scored 27 copies for the Rest of the World!"

In an earlier letter, Stan White discussing the Guinness figures said:

"This of course now makes sense of the figure of 300 sales worldwide, recently published in an American newspaper. It also lends credibility to the claim made in an article reproduced by Reg Bristo in the year before he died, that Bing's record sales were around 1000 million. This allowed for albums but could not calculate copyright expired recordings, or those of American Brunswick, for which no figures ever seemed to exist, except that "I Found A Million Dollar Baby" was in fact eventually Bing's first million seller. "Brother Can You Spare A Dime" might have been but there was a ban put on its sales."

The Guinness entry seems impossible and probably the figure quoted by Stan in his article is more realistic. Unfortunately we shall never really know about Bing's total record sales or the sales of White Christmas. I did notice an interesting item in a reference book recently which said that Bing had 299 US top 20 hits! This is an incredible figure and we should love to have further details of these. Does anyone have access to the Billboard listings and can we have further information?

And as a postcript to all of this, Peter Murray of Edinburgh, brought us back to earth with the following extract from a local paper:

AGGIE ARTHUR of Elie always enjoys the festive season because it means one of her favourite songs is played on the radio again.

It's White Christmas, by Bing Crosby. But Aggie always has a wee smile when she hears the classic.

The Old Groaner was renowned for his love of golf, and often visited St Andrews.

Aggie worked in the town's Woollen Mill for 23 years, until she retired.

One one occasion Bing kept being mobbed by tourists, so it was arranged he could slip into the Woollen Mill after closing time to do some shopping in peace.

He headed for Aggie's counter and chose a length of tweed. Everyone was bowled over by his charm, but Aggie plucked up enough courage to ask him to sing.

BING WAS happy to oblige. But which song would she like?

That was easy. White Christmas.

The shop fell silent as Bing leaned against the counter and began to croon.

But, inexplicably, he stopped halfway through. No one could believe it—Bing Crosby had actually forgotten the words.

Yet he must have performed the song thousands of times.

Like a true master, Bing wasn't thrown, and hummed a few bars before acknowledging the applause from all present.

He paid for the tweed and left, leaving Aggie open mouthed.

And with that most famous of Christmas songs ringing in everyone's ears right now, she still laughs when she recalls the time Bing Crosby forgot the words.

BING ON THE BOX

Malcolm Macfarlane looks inside the box in the corner

Not too many Bing films have been seen on British TV since the last edition, but we have plenty to talk about in this section despite this. First of all, let's list the films transmitted.

Pennies From Heaven	(Channel 4 2/11/91)
The King Of Jazz	(Movie Channel 2/11/91 & 7/11/91)
Here Comes The Groom	(Movie Channel 4/12/91 & 14/12/91)
White Christmas	(BBC2 25/12/91)
Robin And The Seven Hoods	(BBC2 3/1/92)

The showing of Pennies From Heaven was a marvellous surprise. This was, I think, the first time it has been shown on TV in this country and I gather that it clashed with the Rugby World Cup Final. Thank goodness we have VCRs nowadays. I have always thought that Pennies From Heaven was one of the best of Bing's earlier films and that it heralded his forth-

Bing and Edith Fellowes take a moment out from "Pennies From Heaven" (courtesy of Don Haizelden)

coming supremacy on the silver screen. He played the easy going character with whom we all became familiar and his voice was at its best. A great film and I wrote to Channel 4 thanking them for showing it and at the same time suggesting one or two more classics they could dust off. I received a pleasant reply as did several other members to similar letters they sent. Channel 4 said that they did not hold the rights to the other films I suggested but they had noted my interest. I do know that letters such as ours do register and can eventually produce results.

It was disappointing that there were only two Bing films on British TV over Christmas and I was amused by some statistics provided by Lionel Pairpoint whilst commenting on this:-

"In the 14 days (1130 actual viewing hours) which now comprise the 'Christmas Season' for our 4 main television channels, there are 253 films (not counting various cartoons and shorts) with a total running time of 419 hours (it would take 17.5 twenty four hour days to watch the lot). There are also 148 hours of *identifiable* 'repeats' and approximately 35 hours of commercials, news broadcasts, pages from Ceefax etc. So, I should play Monopoly if I were you."

Apart from the films shown, we were delighted to see Leslie Gaylor featured in Primetime on BBC 1 on 11th December. Leslie described the filming of this in the last magazine and I thought that he came over very well. The BBC gave the item an angle by suggesting that Bing's ghostly spirit might be in Leslie's Bing room and personally I could have done without this. The story of how Leslie, a factory worker, came to get superstar Bing on to the Parkinson show was remarkable enough without resorting to gimmicks but nevertheless Bing obtained some useful exposure through the feature.

Bing was also seen briefly in a compilation about the last war called "Going Hollywood — The War Years." This was shown on BBC2 on 7th December to mark the 50th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbour. An excerpt from "All Star Bond Rally" was shown with Bing singing "Buy, Buy Bonds". I missed a series about Billy Wilder in January but I understand that "Emperor Waltz" was discussed and excerpts shown. Apparently Mr. Wilder indicated that the film was a flop.

Radio played many of Bing's seasonal offerings around Christmas-time and I was pleased to hear an hour long programme on Christmas night on GEM AM (broadcasting on 999 AM in the Midlands). This was a straight recording of Bing's final TV Christmas special from 1977 with David Bowie and Twiggy. Unusual to have a TV show broadcast on radio but it came over all right.

The undoubted highlight of the decade so far on the Crosby scene was however the arrival of the new video and at this stage Malcolm hands over to our old friend Bert Bishop.

THE MAGIC OF BING CROSBY - PART ONE

There have been a few, rare moments in my Crosby collecting career that have been highlighted by an intensity of excitement akin to Carter's excavation of the tomb of Tutankhamen, Orville Wright's flight into the future and the night my demob number came up, etc. The unexpected news of the release of 'The Magic Of Bing Crosby' was one of those moments! The Bing 'bush telegraph' works particularly well in Essex, and within hours of the video's availability British Telecom had coined enough in calls by collectors to keep Maureen Lipman in luxury for quite some time ahead. Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the news was the appendage to the title — Part One!

Well, now to the actual package. Directed and produced by Bryan Johnson, the 1991 production is released on the Warner Music Vision label, catalogue number 8536 502994-3 and sells in the U.K. for £10.99. The purple sleeve has familiar photographs of Bing on the front and back, where it also lists the songs featured. The running time being a little over 55 minutes, including credits.

The programme commences with Bing heard singing his 1931 version of "Where The Blue Of The Night", whereupon Rosemary Clooney appears on the screen to say: "My friend and colleague, Bing Crosby, was one of the most loved entertainers of our time . . . he was the voice of America, and he left us an extraordinary legacy of classic songs. . . . It's a pleasure for me to share the magic of Bing with you." There follows a representative selection of black and white photographs of Bing while his signature tune voice-over continues to play. On the dying notes Rosie Clooney comes back to eloquently introduce his first number; "Ol' Man River", from the Bing Crosby Show of 2nd March 1959; one of two songs from that show featured on this cassette. All, barring three, of the nineteen excerpts are in black and white. The coloured items being from later Christmas shows. The set for his first track is very basic and is used again, in essence, for "Twilight On The Trail". However, Bing's up-tempo rendition of the classic song from 'Showboat' outweighs any shortcomings of his surroundings..

Michael Feinstein, a relatively youthful American chap, now takes over the dialogue and describes the "unprecedented success" of Bing's debut on the airwaves . . . "an extraordinary moment in radio history." Whereupon Bing is featured singing "Just One More Chance" from the 1931 Mack Sennett film of the same name. Very good fidelity it is, too.

Kathryn Crosby — looking interested and happy about the proceedings (which is a good omen), speaks of Bing's irresistibility to women through his eyes and voice; her role in the linking dialogue being to highlight his relationship with others and attitude to life on certain matters.

Now it is Bing again: this time on stage and Buddy Cole at the piano with "It Had To Be You". An orchestra, suitably muted, supports the laid-back immaculate pairing in this 3rd January 1954 Bing Crosby Show. We have our recordings of these two supremos, but how many of us living in the U.K. have actually seen them in action before? What a treat!

Bing and Buddy Cole — "It Had To Be You"

Michael Feinstein again — whose role in the programme is to enlarge upon Bing's singing style, and explain with some knowledgeable enthusiasm Bing's easy going, almost self depracating, approach to a song. His dialogue is a natural lead in to an interesting excerpt from Bing's 5th October 1960 show wherein we have two Crosbys for the price of one! Bing, via a bit of clever camera work, duetting with himself in "June In January" and "Learn To Croon". Very nice musically, but rather poor visually; the image being somewhat wishy-washy.

Romemary Clooney takes up the story now by way of an introduction to Louis Armstrong's rather subdued appearance on the Bing Crosby Show of 29th September 1959, where they duet "Basin St. Blues". Louis returns later in the programme, in more characteristic mood where he and his All-Stars, and Bing, recreate the show-stopping "Now You Has Jazz". "Dear captives of the co-axial cable", commences Bing in this memorable performance . . . but I'm jumping the gun here. So back to Kathryn again and her few words where she tells us of the doubts Bing had about recording "Silent Night" for the first time. This interlude serves as a suitable introduction to a presentation of the carol by Bing, with the Bob Mitchell Boys Choir as vocal accompaniment.

Between Bing's songs the three contributors continue to expound their anecdotal dialogue with generous affection for their husband, colleague and admiree, respectively. Whilst expected from the participants, this published eulogy, some fifteen years on from his demise, shows a heartwarming recovery and hit back at the few years there when Bing was being publically defiled by some who should have known better. Long may this new trend continue.

Two of the best excerpts, for my money, are about to happen as I view the tape and type this text. Thirty years apart they may be, but, "You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me", from the 1933 film 'PLEASE', and "I Left My Heart In San Francisco", from the Bing Crosby Show of 24th November 1962, are worth, alone, every penny of the purchase price. Incidentally, the latter song is not the version with which we are most familiar from having been released on privately produced records.

Bing, avec stetson, with a lively stage production of "Y'all Come" (B.C. Show 3/1/54) is the first of two country, or cowboy, songs; the second being "Twilight On The Trail", previously mentioned. His attire of lounge suit on the last named being quite out of context, and I'm surprised that 'wardrobe' didn't provide him with more appropriate garb. Would it be hypercritical to say it would have enhanced Bing's sensitive performance here? I don't think so.

Highlighting Bing's versatility, which is a part of his universal appeal, is the rhythmically up-tempo "Joshua Fit The Battle Of Jericho", spiritedly revived in the company of his sons, Phillip, Dennis and Lindsay. Tragically, only one of this quartet now remaining. Here we are looking back to 29th February 1960.

This number is followed by the aforementioned "Now You Has Jazz"; so let's have a look at the next two items. Both Christmas songs and both in colour. The first is identified as having come from 'Bing Crosby And The Sounds Of Christmas'; 14th December 1971, and features young Harry Crosby on guitar, trying valiantly to provide a backing to his dear old dad with "The Christmas Song". A most uneven match of talent even though Bing's voice was, at that time, less vibrant and melodic than before, and was to become again just a very few years hence.

This happy, family event proceeds to "Give Me The Jing, Jing, Jing Of The Jingle Bells", a big production number, with Bing's performance reminiscent of Robert Preston in the film 'The Music Man'; a role for which Bing was believed to have been considered.

Some footage from quite a rare film presents our man in 1944 doing a solo version of the good record 'Don't Fence Me In" that he cut that year with the Andrews Sisters. Here he is fronting a band for the short, 'Swingtime With The Stars'. Quite a fascinating peak at Bing doing his bit for service morale. This is followed by a considerable zoom back in time to the earlier days when he was also, and originally, playing himself on film. We've all seen the concluding scene of the Mack Sennett movie, 'Blue Of The Night' many times, I'm sure. But it will always remain a classic piece of Crosbyana.

Rightly so, it was inevitable that Rosemary Clooney would be presented in a musical role, considering her valuable spoken contribution. She was a guest on the Bing Crosby Show of 5th October 1960, and in this excerpt they are duetting a medley of "Aren't You Glad You're You?", "I Like The Likes Of You", "Stay As Sweet As You Are" and "There Will Never Be Another You". An agreeably tuneful pot pourri from the well matched duo that follows on with Mr. C. sharing a gondola and a song with Miss Patti Page. Quite a suitable setting for "True Love", with the interjection of some levity when the gondolier proves to be that "young Italian", Dean Martin.

Two considerable quotes from the dialogue are worth including here. Over the voice of Bing singing his 1936 recording of "Pennies From Heaven", and a further array of photographs, Michael Feinstein says:

"Bing Crosby brought enormous happiness and gratification to millions of people. He had an extraordinary ability to change the way people felt. Even if he had only made the recording of "White Christmas" he would have been responsible for a lot of peace and happiness in the world."

Rosemary Clooney:

"No collection of Bing's songs will be complete without the great Irving Berlin classic, "White Christmas". I've sung it with him. It's one of my favourite memories, and a fitting way for us to close this magic hour with Bing. So here's "White Christmas", perhaps the song with which he is best remembered, and, hearing this, one can truly understand why there will never, ever be another Bing Crosby."

So, there it is. Bing with his family, Robert Goulet and Mary Costa from his Christmas Show of 14th December 1971. A colourful conclusion to a magical hour indeed. More please!

Let it be noted that Leslie Gaylor and the ICC are thanked in the credits.

Bert Bishop

Thanks, Bert for your most comprehensive review of the new video.

We had received notice of the appearance of the video in the USA just prior to the publication of the last BING and we vaguely thought that we might eventually have it on sale over here. What a pleasant surprise to see it on sale at the end of November and there seemed to be plenty of copies about. As Bert says, the video is a good mixture of interviews with Kathryn Crosby, Rosemary Clooney and Michael Feinstein interspersed with rare TV clips and extracts from seldom seen films. Charles Baillie, Ernest Sutkowski and Leslie Gaylor get credits at the end of the 55 minute video albeit that their names are spelt incorrectly. It was nice to see the ICC, Bob Lundberg and BCHS getting a mention too. Charles Baillie of Bingtalks did an enormous amount of work to help the film company and our thanks are extended to him. Ernest Sutkowski passed on the following review of the video which appeared in Entertainment Weekly in the US.

The Magic of Bing Crosby Part One (1991, A*Vision, $19.98)

At the time of his death in 1977, the legendary crooner Bing Crosby had been a touchstone in American popular culture for so long that many people considered him passe, if not obsolete. Now there are signs of a Crosby revival - a glut of record reissues and video releases of his movies - and Crosby's gorgeous baritone and incomparable laid-back phrasing are attracting a whole new audience. This hour-long video

compilation of 20 rare clips is a fine introduction, drawing on film shorts he made in the early '30s, before achieving Hollywood stardom, and TV shows he made in the '50s and '60s, when his fame had achieved nearly mythic proportions. Many classics are included, notably two collaborations with Louis Armstrong (what a delightful blending of timbres they produce on "Basin Street Blues"). The credit roll fails to identify the clips, which considering their rarity is a particular annoyance, but the chance to see them again is a tonic. - GARY GIDDENS.

If the name Gary Giddins sounds familiar it should do,because we gave details of the book he is writing on Bing in the last issue. Les Gaylor tells us that Gary hoped to visit the UK in March and was arranging to meet Alan Dell amongst others. We had already gone to print before his planned arrival but any news will be passed on in August's issue.

To summarise, the items used in th video were as follows:

Ol' Man River (Bing Crosby Show 2/3/59)
Just One More Chance (One More Chance — Mack Sennett 1931)
It Had To Be You (Bing Crosby Show 3/1/54)
June In January/Learn To Croon (Bing Crosby Show 5/10/60)
Basin Street Blues (with Louis Armstrong — Bing Crosby Show 29/9/59)
Silent Night (with the Bob Mitchell Boys Choir — Forties film — source?)
You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me (from the Paramount short "Please" 1933)
I Left My Heart In San Francisco (Bing Crosby Show 24/12/62)
Y'all Come (Bing Crosby Show 3/1/54)
Joshua Fit The Battle Of Jericho (with Crosby Brothers — Bing Crosby Show 29/2/60)
Now You Has Jazz (with Louis Armstrong — The Edsel Show 13/10/57)
The Christmas Song (with Harry Crosby on guitar — Bing Crosby And The Sounds Of Christmas 14/12/71)
Give Me The Jing, Jing, Jing Of The Jingle Bells (Together Again For The First Time — with Carol Burnett — 18/12/69)
Don't Fence Me In (Swingtime With The Stars 1944)
Where The Blue Of The Night (Blue Of The Night — Mack Sennett 1931)
Twilight On The Trail (Bing Crosby Show 2/3/59)
Aren't You Glad You're You/I Like The Likes Of You/Stay As Sweet As You Are/There Will Never Be Another You (with Rosemary Clooney — Bing Crosby Show 5/10/60)
True Love (with Patti Page & Dean Martin — Bing Crosby Show 1/10/58)
White Christmas (with family, Robert Goulet and Mary Costa — Bing Crosby And The Sounds Of Christmas 14/12/71)

A video release such as this has been long overdue and the good news is that Bryan Johnson tells me that Part Two should probably be out by the summer. The sooner the better! If a market develops for videos such as this, an enterprising company might do well by issuing the 1978 ABC TV programme "Bing Crosby — His Life And Legend". This was a definitive tribute which covered most facets of Bing's career and it would be a very popular release.

Finally, for the collector who must have everything we can give details of another video which has surfaced recently. Entitled "Comic Toons presents The Little Dutch Mill and other cartoon classics", this is a collection of somewhat vintage cartoons and it includes "Hollywood Steps Out" in which a cartoon version of Bing is seen introducing cabaret acts. Page 10 of "The Road To Hollywood" gives further details.

SEEN IN AN OLD EDITION OF READERS DIGEST

"Late one Christmas Day, a resident of the elegant community of Hillsborough, California, accompanied by his wife and children, set out to sing carols for the neighbours. As they were tuning up outside their first stop, the woman of the house came to the door, looking distraught. "Look," she said, "I'm just too busy. The plumbing's on the blink, I can't get anybody to fix it, and there's a mob coming to dinner. If you really feel like singing carols, come back about nine o'clock. OK?"

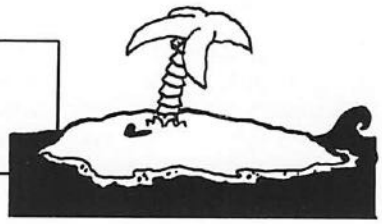
"Yes ma'am," replied Bing Crosby respectfully, as he herded his troupe elsewhere."

* * * * * *

BING'S LAUGHING RECORD?

David Malkin has sent us an interesting cutting from the Blackpool Evening Gazette. It covers the laughing clown at the entrance to the famous Pleasure Beach and describes how a new laugh has had to be recorded to replace the tape of the old laugh which was lost in a fire. The interesting part from our point of view is that the old laugh "came from 7 copies of a 78 rpm American record called Bing's Laughing Record." This is the first we have heard of this and does anyone know what the recording was? The fluffed version of "We're A Couple Of Soldiers" comes to mind but further information would be welcomed.

DESERT ISLAND BING



Most members will have doubtless read about the 50th anniversary of BBC's long running "Desert Island Discs". The programme, first broadcast in 1942, puts a celebrity castaway on a desert island with nothing but a gramophone (wind-up type, presumably) at his or her disposal. The programme then features the eight records which the castaway would take with them, plus one book (other than The Bible) and one luxury.

Prime Minister John Major was the special castaway to mark the anniversary programme and sadly, failed to provide himself with a Crosby record. However, we can look and see how many of his predecessors displayed a more perceptive taste. The programme's founder and presenter until his death in 1986 was Roy Plomley. Around the time of the programme's 40th anniversary, Plomley published a listing of the choices made by the 1700 castaways who had idled their time in the sand since 1942. Number 1321 was none other than our man Bing, of which more later. First, let's look at the way in which Bing's recordings featured in the programme over those years.

Within the first 1700 programmes, there were approximately 120 Crosby records selected by the various castaways — an average of roughly one every fourteen programmes. Inevitably, Bing's appearances were fewer in the 70s and 80s, although the longest gap in which he was absent came between programme 964 in April 1969 (when Hetty King selected "Night and Day") and number 1124 in May 1972 (when David Bryant, the bowling champion, selected "Gone Fishin'). Bing's first appearance came on 23 July 1942 in programme 17 when the actor Leslie Howerd opted for "Folks Who Live On The Hill", thus starting a fairly regular string of appearances.

The most often selected Crosby recording was "White Christmas", which is perhaps no surprise. Indeed, the record may have played something akin to its wartime role in not only bringing back memories of Bing, but also memories of Christmas in winter. Doubtless, our desert island would have had Christmas in sunnier circumstances.

Several titles appeared more than once including:

Gone Fishin'
I Love You Samantha
Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Shean
And The Angels Sing
True Love
Well! Did You Evah?
Silent Night
Road To Morocco
Brother Can You Spare A Dime?

It will be apparent from that listing that "High Society" was well served, although that aside, the album of Bing's which gained most plays was the contentious "Bing Sings Whilst Bregman Swings" which provided "Have You Met Miss Jones?" (Peggy Cochrane), "I've Got Five Dollars" (Dickie Valentine) and "Mountain Greenery" (Eric Barker). It would never have been one of Reg Bristo's choices, but variety is the spice of life!

Several of Bing's associates appeared in the show over the years. Bob Hope was cast away during December 1961 and selected "White Christmas" along with items by Judy Garland, Maurice Chevalier and his own "Thanks For The Memory". Joan Bennett back in 1963 was one of a few people who selected two Crosby records, "You're The Top" and "Road To Morocco", as did Jack Buchanan in 1951 with "So Tall A Tree" and "Swing Low Sweet Chariot". Douglas Fairbanks jnr in 1976 selected Bing's "My Blue Heaven" alongside items by the Beatles and Barbara Streisand. Bing didn't make Louis Armstrong's list in 1968, but then again, very few people did. Of Louis' seven records, five were his own. Just for good measure, his luxury was a trumpet (to entertain the natives no doubt) whilst his book was his own autobiography! Oh to be so humble.

Bing and his Desert Island luxury

Bing's own appearance came on 27 December 1975. It was a slightly low key Bing who seemed either tired or distracted, and not really falling in with the light-hearted spirit of the programme. Bing's choices lent heavily on the big band era, and were:

South Rampart St Parade (Bob Crosby)
Clair de Lune (Debussy)
And The Angels Sing (Benny Goodman)
Moonlight Serenade (Glenn Miller)
Liebestraum (Liszt)
Begin The Beguine (Artie Shaw)
Song Of India (Tommy Dorsey)
Cavallera Rusticana (Mascaqui)

Bing's Luxury was a guitar and his book a Roget's Thesaurus.

Bing seemed quite content with the prospect of just his own company. He was keen that the island should be in the South Pacific so that he could swim and fish. One other interesting digression in the conversation related to Bing's superstitions — never walk under a ladder, and more intriguingly, never leave a hat on a bed!

Sue Lawley now has Plomley's chair, and the list of castaways continues to grow. The bias towards the classics remains too, but doubtless the Crosby voice will also come sweeping through the palms from time to time.

Ken Crossland

TRADING POST

Entries are free for all items of Crosbyana and there is a nominal charge of £1 for non-Crosby advertisements. All items are printed in good faith and we cannot accept responsibility for any dissatisfaction arising from transactions undertaken as a result of these entries.

Please send all advertisements to the Assistant Editor, Malcolm Macfarlane, whose address is given at the beginning of the magazine.

Jack Souther, 2011-44th Avenue, San Francisco, California 94116, USA

Inquiries, general or specific wants lists welcomed. Disposing of complete Bing Crosby collection, consisting of 1500 plus 45s, 78s, LPs, V discs, 10" to 16" non-commercial pressings, alternate takes. Also more than 50 books, 800 8" x 10" photos, 300 sheet music, 6 16mm films, 45 27" x 41" movie sheets and one 1964 Bing show script. Some of the rarer items:

Books — Dr. Mize (1948) H/back "BING"
— Ted Crosby (1937 orig.) S/back "BING"

16" pressings — Compete s/t — shellac — (1930) "King Of Jazz"
— RCA — Para. Pub. record — "Road To Singapore"
— RCA — Para. Pub. record — "Double Or Nothing"

12" LPs — Road To Hollywood series; High Tor; Sunday In Hollywood — Bing & Ann Blythe

12" 78s — BR.20106 Face The Music Medley
— BR.20109 Lawd You Made The Night Too Long

10" 78s — OK.41228 Susianna; OK.41181 Spell Of The Blues; Decca label Acetate, sung by Louis Armstrong "Happy Birthday To Papa Bing Crosby" May 2, 1939; Decca Test, DLA 1296A Don't Let That Moon Get Away.

One sided private special records from 1980s Bing Crosby Estate Auction.

— 7" LP pressing, Hosanna To Horseshoes, CR 3095 — 6 Bing songs, parodies, Bing signature facsimile.
— 7" — 45 rpm acetate — Texas Quail Hunt
— 7" — 45 rpm acetate — Hello Dolly
— 7" — 45 rpm acetate — On The River St. Jean (7-20-71)

(Asst. Editor: Wow! This has to be one of the more important sales of recent years and a chance to pick up the really rare items.)

Alastair Airey, Kapanga Rd., Coromandel, New Zealand.

I wonder if anyone has got a tape of the KMH shows of 6th February 1941 and 11th December 1941 with Paul Robeson as Bing's guest? My two favourite singers together, what bliss.

Swaps? Well all I can offer is a room and a bed to anyone coming this way to our beautiful coast!

(Asst. Editor: Sounds like a good deal to me. Anyone who can help, write direct to Alastair please and send us a postcard when you claim your swap! Incidentally, I don't think that Bing and Paul actually sang together in the shows mentioned but if anyone knows differently, please let me know.)

Dick Nettleton, 111 Faringdon Rd., Stanford in the Vale, Faringdon, Oxon SN7 8LD. (Tel: 0367 718889).

We apologise for quoting an incorrect address and telephone number for Dick in the last BING. (I think we spelt his name correctly, but I won't guarantee it!) He is still looking for enquiries for his Bing collection as detailed in Trading Post in the last edition. Buyers will need to collect. Bing and non-Bing lists available on request by phone or letter.

Ken Merry, 28 The Avenue, Bessacarr, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 5JX.

Recently, I read in a so-called quality newspaper that 18% of our population were over 60 which is

quite a large proportion of the national community and yet in many ways this proportion is deprived, overlooked and disenfranchised. However what concerns us here is how all this affects the Bing membership.

From January, Frances Line has decreed as head of Radio 2 that no recordings before 1950 will be played during daytimes on weekdays. She has eliminated 5 hours per week of David Jacobs, half-an-hour of Steve Race and one hour of Desmond Carrington and when you count what is left, Alan Dell, Benny Green and Hubert Gregg, there is not a lot of our kind of music out of 7 days and nights of continuous broadcasting.

Any British radio programme on Bing will more and more become rarer as will those singers and Bands of his era. For my own pleasure and when convenient, I recorded with very good FM reception, fine programmes on Bing as well as his famous contemporaries or successors. Because this material (like discontinued LPs) will become unavailable, I am prepared to offer them to members as follows.

ON CASSETTE: British Radio programmes on Bing: Becoming rare by the minute: Examples:

Bing's Holiday Choice of Records 25/8/75
Bing's Last Broadcast 27/12/77
Solid Gold Bing: Bob Hope's Choice of Bing's Hits 16/10/76
Alan Dell's Annual Birthday Tributes and other Bing programmes.

ALSO:

Some Bing Philco Radio Shows (originally acquired from Bob Roberts who before he died was reputedly the biggest Bing collector in Britain).

SAE PLEASE FOR LISTS.

(Asst. Editor: Some valid points from Ken. I believe that Frances Line's actions are based on market research which shows that the average age of Radio 2 audience is getting older and that increasingly, people aged 40 to 50 are turning to the commercial radio stations which appear to cater more carefully to their musical tastes. The BBC is obviously unwilling to surrender these members of their listening audience without a fight, hence the change in policy which will cut out much of the pre-1950 records. I don't like it but I can understand the commercial decision taken by the BBC.)

Peter Murray, 5 Hyvot View, Edinburgh EH17 8PQ.

Peter is looking for a cassette of the "Paul Whiteman — The Victor Masters" CD, number RCA 9678-2-R. Any one who can help, please write to Peter.

(Asst Editor: Seeing the advert for The Record Centre prompts me to say what a good job Ray Purslow and his team do for us Crosby collectors. Ray is extremely knowledgeable about Bing's records and can always be relied upon to help members.)

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Mrs. Joan Milford, Carisbrooke, Thornley Drive, Teignmouth, Devon TQ14 9JH. (Tel. 0626 779594)

Mrs. Milford is having to dispose of her late husband's record collection. In a letter to me she says that there are over 100 Bing 78s ranging over the Brunswick, Capitol & HMV labels plus hundreds of tapes, LPs and CDs. There is also an extensive collection of other artists and Mrs. Milford says that she feels rather like a second hand record store! She is also looking to dispose of many old Bing magazines and booklets (Crosby Posts, Crosby Collectors) and the keenly sought "Road To Bing Crosby". She is still in the process of listing what's available but anyone interested please contact her direct. SAE for lists.

Don Haizelden, Brunswick House, 12 Park Lane, Long Sutton, Lincs PE12 9DH (Tel: 0406 364001)

Don is in the happy position of having a surplus record of "I've Got The Girl" US Columbia 824-D, condition E. He is anxiously looking for the Australian equivalent of this record and is eager to trade. He appreciates however that this may be a forlorn hope and he would therefore be interested in trading his record for other rare items.
Quite separate from this, Don is looking for a 78 version of Church Bells/Rain (Brunswick 05790) if it exists. Can anyone confirm the existence of this record?

(Asst. Editor: Don has an incredible collection of Crosbyana at his aptly named home and I am nagging him to let us have photographs of some of the rarer items for a "Collectors Corner" type feature. I'll keep my fingers crossed that he'll be able to do something for us.)

Paul Pinch, 75 Priory Avenue, Haverfordwest, Dyfed SA61 1SG.

". . . I have formed a Jack Benny Fan Club and if any members are interested, please contact me. All enquiries should please be accompanied by a SAE. I will be having a section for Fan Club/Appreciation Societies in my newsletter and will mention the ICC."

Ken Seavor, 9 Glenwood Drive, Irby, Wirral L61 4UG.

Wanted — a copy of either Brunswick BING-1 ("Easy To Remember") or Brunswick LA-8723 ("Collector's Classics Vol. 2"). Please state price and condition of item.

Mrs. Jean Lowe, 31 St Albans Court, New Street, Willenhall, W. Mids. WV13 3TD. (Tel: 0902 604546)

Mrs. Lowe is disposing of her late husband's, Jim's, collection of 580 tapes and 50 LPs. She would like it to go to a younger member who is seeking to build up a collection. Price is £100 inc catalogues and cabinet. Buyer to collect.

ONCE IN A WHILE

Three notable deaths of people connected with the Bing scene have occurred in recent months. November brought news of the death of:-

Fred MacMurray is remembered for many famous films, such as "Double Indemnity" but it was his portrayal of David Beebe in "Sing You Sinners" that made his impact on the Crosby world. He inadvertently helped to shape Bing's career when he turned down a starring role in "Road To Singapore" thus giving Bing and Bob Hope the opportunity to team up together. A fine actor who also played the clarinet, Fred had known Bing for many years and he used to tell the story of how he was omitted from Bing's annual Golf Tournament because he had to cry off once due to ill health. Bing reinstated him as a competitor when it was realised what had happened.

The singing Beebes in the shape of Donald O'Connor, Bing and Fred MacMurray

Yves Montand died on 9th November, 1991 at the age of 70. Another good actor but inevitably we shall remember him being taught to sing "Incurably Romantic" by Bing in the film "Let's Make Love"

Regrettably, we also lost **Renee Chester**, one of our staunchest and keenest members. Jim Reilly provided the tribute which follows. We should also note the passing of **Rena Albanesi** in the USA. Rena acted as American correspondent for BING in the 60s, as well as being involved with BINGANG.

RENEE CHESTER

It was with great sadness that I learnt of the death of Renee Chester at her home in Nottingham, after a long illness on the 15th January 1992 aged 68. Renee leaves husband Denis and daughters Sandra and Carole. She will be sadly missed by her family and many members of ICC. My sincere condolences to out to her family at this sad time.

I first met Renee in 1978 and spent many enjoyable hours at her home in Hanwell listening to or watching

Bing on video beore she and Denis moved to Spain. I can also recall spending an enjoyable day at Renee's with other Bing fans and singer Teddy Johnson; of Pearl and Teddy fame. Another memory I have of Renee was when a car full of Crosby people including the likes of Leslie Gaylor, travelled to the BBC Maida Vale Studios to see Vera Lynn unveil a plaque to commemorate Bing's last radio broadcast.

Renee was one of the most staunch and enthusiastic Crosby fans I have known. Renee's enthusiasm enabled her to be one of a very few people present at the unveiling of the 'Bing' plaque at the London Palladium. She also attended the unveiling of the Bing statue at Gonzaga University. It was at Gonzaga that she met Kathryn Crosby and got an invite to Bing's home at Hillsborough, which I am sure was a memory she treasured all her life.

Renee and Kathryn Crosby at Gonzaga in in May 1981

Derek Parkes' Crosby Collectors Club

It is nice to be able to report in the 100th edition of 'BING' that your record club has reached a new height in activity. Membership is constantly rising and more and more discs are going overseas. Happily there is a two way exchange as with more overseas contacts, the more news is received of foreign releases.

The club has now been completely reorganised and anyone who has not done so must re-register in order to receive information as to how to order. The new system makes it much easier to run the club and it will result in a much more efficient service. Membership costs £2 but this sum and more could easily be recovered with the first disc you buy as many discs are now substantially below shop prices. Arrangements can also be made for new releases to be sent to you as they become available.

The club has had its difficulties. A long holiday in Australia caused an accumulation of mail which, with the reorganisation of the club, has caused some delays and the occasional misplaced letter. Mainly fringe activities have been badly delayed in the concentration of effort to send off CDs. The situation is now much improved so if YOU have been disappointed please send a reminder. No one is purposely neglected.

It will be noticed that club (DCP) prices are no longer given in BING. This information is readily available to club members but any disc may be ordered with a £7 deposit with the price adjusted on delivery.

Both old members and those wishing to join the club should send their £2 to this address:

D. PARKES
66 FIRS ROAD, FIRSDOWN
SALISBURY, WILTS SP5 1SW
ENGLAND
TEL: WINTERSLOW 0980 862688

Currency notes or local currency cheques may be sent from:

USA	$4.00
AUSTRALIA	$5.00

From elsewhere you must pay in English currency but you may delay payment until your first order. This concession is to minimise possible bank charges.

LP SALE
Following the death of a long standing collector of Bing records an entire collection is currently on sale. Discs are being sold individually. Please send two 24p stamps for the initial list.

BOOKS: A few requests have been received for the Morgereth book 'BING CROSBY — A DISCOGRAPHY, RADIO PROGRAM LIST AND FILMOGRAPHY'. Details of this book have been given previously. Mention should be made that the book is becoming of far more interest with the increased release of radio material on CD. Those of you who have bought the club's Chesterfield tapes will find every title listed with the relevant information. Only six copies are available.

In order to obtain a substantial discount on the order, copies of another book were also purchased. Only two copies remain unallocated. The book is 'SOUNDIES DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION' by Terenzio. 'Soundies' are films which last around four minutes which feature the popular artists of the war years. They feature vocalists, vocal groups such as the Mills Brothers and most of the swing and jazz bands of that period with dancing and pretty girls to add visual interest. Unfortunately Bing is not present on any. 'Soundies' have been shown on Channel 4 TV and many are currently available on video cassettes. Originally these films were shown on the 'Mills Panorama Machine', the visual equivalent of a coin operated Juke Box.

40% discount has been obtained on these books and provided all are sold, the price to you, including postage from the States and local postage, is as follows:

BING CROSBY £20 (about £28 full retail price in USA)
SOUNDIES £14

Please note that if all copies are not sold a somewhat higher price will be charged — but not more than £30 for the Bing book which is still less than it would cost you to import a single copy. Note also that with the reduced demand for the Bing book it is unlikely that it will be possible to offer this book again at such favourable terms.

To order either, or both of the above books please send £20 and/or £14 as appropriate to the address shown above. To ensure that you get a copy REORDER EVEN IF YOU HAVE ALREADY REQUESTED A COPY. This will save having to hunt through a lot of mail. Details were not put on file when it was thought unlikely that more copies would be ordered.

Even as this is being typed more and more details are being received of forthcoming releases. As the years roll by more and more of Bing's recordings are entering the public domain. Some of the smaller record companies are interested. Radio material is becoming more available and a Bing with Ella CD should make an interesting appearance soon. There is news of a Singalong CD and one of cowboy songs. These could all be available before the next issue of 'BING'. If you can't wait till then you can read about the 'important' issues in the Newsheet of the Crosby Collectors Club.

COMPACT DISC INDEX

With the number of issued 'full' Bing CDs hovering around 100 and even more 'guest' appearances on CD it is becoming more difficult to advise people of what is available on CD. Recently more people have been asking for detailed listings and all the time it is becoming more and more impracticable. The other problem is that the issue of CDs is ongoing. Since the number of people interested is likely to be small and the cash available limited, a project has been devised that is relatively inexpensive and versatile since it allows each individual to arrange the information in the order of their choosing including as much, or as little, of the information as they wish. Each CD can be portrayed in full colour with the full contents listed. The design allows for subsequent additions and so it follows tht the whole can be produced in easily affordable units. The cost will depend on the size of the final product — about £2 for 10 CDs. An index would be extra which, if alphabetical, would require to be updated from time to time. This is purely an indication of what can be done. It requires at least ten people to make it viable. Write to the C.C.C. (address above) if you are interested. If there is sufficient interest to go ahead you will receive a full explanation of the scheme. Please send two 18p stamps to cover the cost of printing and postage. Remember that it will be much cheaper to get in at the beginning. If you try to come in at a later date the CD reprints will cost much more.

NEW RELEASES, REISSUES OR PREVIOUS OMISSIONS

Read this section carefully as there are many Christmas tracks that have not been previously released (Laserlight), alternate takes Decca Jazz/MCA and Timeless have released the oldest 'new' recording from Bing's very first recording session with Whiteman (22 Dec. 26).

PRIME CUTS — listing the best of the latest finds.

CD **DECCA JAZZ GRD-603 BING CROSBY AND SOME JAZZ FRIENDS** USA £8
CD **MCA GRP 16032** Austria or Germany £?

Your Socks Don't Match
My Baby Said Yes ‡‡‡
Basin Street Blues
Yes Indeed
Someday Sweetheart
Moonburn
Pennies From Heaven (excerpt)
The Waiter And The Porter And The Upstairs Maid
The Birth Of The Blues
Blue (And Broken Hearted)
After You've Gone ‡‡‡
After You've Gone
Personality (Faulty start)
Pinetop's Boogie Woogie
On The Sunnyside Of The Street
I Still Suits Me
I Ain't Got Nobody
Deep In The Heart Of Texas
When My Dreamboat Comes Home
Gone Fishin'

‡‡‡ Previously unissued takes.

Playing Time: 60 minutes Tracks: 20

The 'Jazz Friends' singing along with Bing include: Louis Jordan; Connee Boswell; Louis Armstrong; Mary Martin; Jack Teagarden; Lee Wiley. They all contribute to making this one of the best CD releases. The new owners of the old Decca material who have taken over MCA are GRP Records Inc. and they appear to have taken a lot of trouble to get the best sound. They have gone right back to old metals or original taped masters and then processed the digital tapes with the computerised 'NoNOISE' system. It seems to have worked well although there are many who have misgivings about 'in depth' noise reduction using computers.

CD **RCA BVCJ-2029 BING WITH A BEAT** Japan £19.99 (from The Record Centre)

Let A Smile Be Your Umbrella
I'm Gonna Sit Right Down And Write . . .
Along the Way To Waikiki
Exactly Like You
Dream A Little Dream Of Me
Last Night On The Back Porch
Some Sunny Day
Whispering
Tell Me
Mack The Knife
Down Among The Sheltering Palms
Mama Loves Papa

Playing Time: 38 minutes
Tracks: 12

These tracks are all with Bob Scobey's Frisco Jazz Band and if that is your type of music then this, with Bing, is one of the best CDs. It seems such a shame that it is necessary to quibble about the price!

CD **ARIOLA EXPRESS 295040 BING CROSBY — DREAM A LITTLE DREAM OF ME** UK £6

Ol' Man River
Three Little Words
It Must Be True
Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams
Just a Gigolo
I'm Thru' With Love (radio)
Just One More Chance (radio)
Some Sunny Day
I'm Gonna Sit Right Down And Right Write . . .
Mack The Knife
Dream A Little Dream Of Me
Whispering
Down Among The Sheltering Palms
The Little Things In Life
One More Time
Them There Eyes

Playing Time: Approx. 48 minutes
Tracks: 16

This CD is identical to the German release — even to the same release number that was misprinted in BING No 93. However, the front inlay card is far superior — an excellent picture of Bing in a trilby hat. The title 'Dream A Little Dream Of Me' is not shown on the disc — just on the inlay card. Reasonably good to excellent sound.

CD **PARROT PARCD 001 PEGGY LEE WITH BING CROSBY 'IT'S A GOOD DAY'** UK £10

It's A Good Day
Everything's Moving Too Fast
Baby You Can Count On Me
The Best Man
I Still Suits Me
You Came A Long Way From St. Louis
Exactly Like You
I Got Rhythm
A Little Bird Told Me
On A Slow Boat To China
Cuanta La Gusta
Top Hat, White Tie And Tails (1)
Cheek To Cheek
A Fine Romance (2)
They Can't Take That Away From Me
Dearly Beloved
White Christmas
Catalogue Day (2)
Kamehameha Day (2)
Maybe You'll Be There

All Tracks are duets with Peggy Lee except:

1. Bing with Fred Astaire
2. Bing, Peggy and Fred

Playing Time: 78 minutes
Tracks: 36 from Philco radio 1946-1948

The sixteen unlisted tracks are all Peggy Lee solos. Almost all of this material has never been released before — even 'Cuanta La Gusta' is a different version to the one that appeared on the Radio Years discs. Sound quality is excellent and the songs are great. Ten of the tracks are included in a medley which also features Fred Astaire. The great news is that Volume 2 should be available as you read this as it is planned for release in April. A special low price is available to all Crosby Collectors Club members for all Parrot releases.

CD **PARADE PAR 2021 BING CROSBY — THE MOST WELCOME GROANER** UK ?£5
3CD **PARADE PAK 904 WE MUST NEVER SAY GOODBYE** UK £10.50

My Heart Is Taking Lessons
The Funny Old Hills
Joobalai
East Side Of Heaven
Hang Your Heart On A Hickory Limb
On The Sentimental Side
This Is My Night To Dream
I Have Eyes
You're A Sweet Little Headache
That Sly Old Gentleman
An Apple For The Teacher
A Man And His Dream
Still The Bluebird Sings
April Played The Fiddle
I Haven't Time To Be A Millionaire
In My Merry Oldsmobile
Medley Of Gus Edwards' Song Hits
Go Fly A Kite
The Moon And The Willow Tree
Meet The Sun Half Way

Playing Time: 58 minutes
Tracks: 20

This is good value for your money — especially the 3 CD set which includes two non-Bing CDs:

(1) Remembering The Forties — 20 dance band tracks
(2) Vera Lynn — Let's Meet Again

The material on all three CDs comes mainly from the late thirties with the dance band tracks slipping into the early forties. You may want to dance with the bands or sing along with Vera Lynn but almost certainly you will want to sing and dance with Bing when you play this lively CD. All three CDs are available individually.

CD **AXIS CDAX 701592 THE STARS IN SONG** Australia £7

The Road To Morocco (w. B. Hope)
Mr. Meadowlark
A Couple Of Song And Dance Men
Yah-Ta-Ta, Yah-Ta-Ta
A Fine Romance
Mr. Crosby And Mr. Mercer
The Waiter And The Porter And The Upstairs Maid
Down By The Riverside
Pennies From Heaven (12" version)
Mr. Crosby And Mr. Mercer
The Spaniard That Blighted My Life
There's No Business Like Show Business

Playing Time: 57 minutes
Tracks: 19

There is no solo track on this CD. Bing frolics with: Bob Hope; Johnny Mercer; Fred Astaire; Judy Garland; Dixie Lee Crosby; Mary Martin; Jack Teagarden; Gary Crosby; Frances Langford; Louis Armstrong; Al Jolson; Dick Haymes and The Andrews Sisters. Yes, there are two takes of 'Mr. Crosby And Mr. Mercer' and there are even more stars: Shirley Ross; Jimmy Durante; Gene Kelly; and Ethel Merman on the non-Bing tracks.

CD **TIMELESS RECORDS CBC 1-004 TIMELESS HISTORICAL PRESENTS BING CROSBY 1926-1932.** Holland ?£6.50. UK £14

Pretty Lips (BVE 37286-1)
Muddy Water
I'm Coming, Virginia (take 9)
Mississippi Mud/I Left My Sugar . . .
Changes (3)
Mary (2)
Ol' Man River
Make Believe
From Monday On (BVE 41689-4)
Lovable
Louisiana (1)
You Took Advantage Of Me
'Tain't So, Honey, 'Tain't So
Susianna
The Spell Of The Blues
Let's Do It (Dorsey Brothers)
My Kinda Love (W148073)
So The Bluebirds And The Blackbirds . . .
If I Had A Talking Picture Of You
Happy Feet
Three Little Words
One More Time
Dinah (A) w. Mills Brothers
St. Louis Blues (A)

Playing Time: 75 minutes
Tracks: 24

Unfortunately this CD is not to hand but it is eagerly awaited as it not only contains many of the best of the 'Whiteman period' tracks, many are the rarer takes, but the creme de la creme . . . here we have a version of 'Pretty Lips' recorded more than two months before the issued version. It carries a different matrix number and it is the third earliest known Bing recording. It is issued now for the first time just over 65 years since it was recorded. As with the issued version it is sung with Al Rinker and features the Paul Whiteman Orchestra. But apart from this rarity, if there is anyone who has not ventured into the Whiteman period, try this disc as you will surely want more. The sound quality must be good as both John R.T. Davies and John McNicholas are associated with this release. With conflicting information as to the cost, C.C.C. members are assured of a reasonable price.

CD **KNIGHT RECORDS KSHCD 170 A GOLDEN HOUR OF BING CROSBY** UK £5

Straight Down The Middle
Nice Work If You Can Get It
Anything Goes
I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face
Please Don't Talk About Me . . .
They Didn't Believe Me
I Guess I'll Have To Change My Plan
Ain't Misbehavin'
Count Your Blessings
What Is This Thing Called Love
She's Funny That Way
Come Rain Or Come Shine
Way Down Yonder In New Orleans
Love Is Just Around The Corner
Yes Sir! That's My Baby
You Turned The Tables On Me
Don't Take Your Love From Me
I Can't Get Started
My Funny Valentine
Let's Put Out The Lights And Go To Sleep
Yours
You're The Top
The Isle Of Capri

Playing Time: 62 minutes
Tracks: 23

The music on this CD is delightful and the price is right but it is yet another CD extracted from that wonderful '10th Anniversary Collection' issued on Warwick by Ken Barnes. Thank you, Ken, the original three CD set is great!

CD **ECHO JAZZ EJCO-12 BIG BAND DAYS** ?USA £?

Lady Of Spain
P.S. I Love You
If This Isn't Love
Five Minutes More
Wish You Were Here
Jamboree Jones

Ol' Buttermilk Sky
Mona Lisa
Don't Let The Stars Get In Your Eyes
Hawaiian Wedding Song
Song From 'Moulin Rouge'
It's Beginning To Look Like Christmas
Undecided
I Get Ideas
Memphis Blues
A Kiss To Build A Dream On

Information of this CD was found in 'Bingang'. Derek would appreciate a copy (or copies) of this CD so as to make a better review possible.

CD **RAINBOW MUSIC FOR PLEASURE MFPCD 023 16 ORIGINAL WORLD HITS** Australia £5

Deep In The Heart Of Texas
Poinciana
San Fernando Valley
Amor
Long Ago And Far Away
You Belong To My Heart
Chattanooga Shoe Shine Boy
A Gal In Calico
Sioux City Sue
Ballerina
Moonlight Bay
In A Little Spanish Town
Mule Train
Riders In The Sky
La Vie En Rose
Symphony

Playing Time: 45 minutes
Tracks: 12

This is a reissue of that elusive 'Golden Gate' CD which eventually turned out to be a German made MCA (8.62008LZ 256137-2) mainly found in the Far East. Look to the east once more for this budget release. . . or the Crosby Collectors Club.

CD **EVASOUND MUSIC EMD 002 BING CROSBY — PLEASE** Australia £5

This CD was obtained from a somewhat annoyed Australian. When he bought it he believed he had found a new compilation but it proved to be a reissue of Robert Parker's first release of Bing material (ABC 836172-2/BBC CD648). It seems unnecessary to list the tracks which on this CD have a different running order.

CD **PICKWICK PKD 3022 BING 'N' BASIE** Australia £5

Another quality budget reissue from Australia which must be known to all. The release (EmArcy 824705-2) was the very first Bing CD released in the UK.

CD **WORLD STAR COLLECTION WSC 99056 HIGH SOCIETY** Australia £5

The sound quality on this reissue CD is reasonably good but doesn't compare with that on the Japanese Capitol release that was reviewed in the last issue of BING. London prices of the Japanese disc seem to have dropped to £17 in some stores. This material has also been released on CeDe CD66056. Apart from the label the whole presentation of the WSC release is identical to the CeDe issue. Both discs come from the same stamper as indicated by the details embossed round the central hole — even to the CeDe release number on the WSC disc.

CD **JSP JSPCD 702 BING CROSBY AND JUDY GARLAND** UK £13

This CD has now been repressed and for those of you who are intrigued by such things, the disc colour has been changed from red to white. Unfortunately, its label mate 'Jimmy Durante And Bing Crosby' (JSP CD701) is now temporarily out of print.

CD **GNP CRESCENDO D 19080 THE RADIO YEARS — 1944-1953** Australia £9

Zip A Dee Doo Dah
Two To Tango
Valencia
How Are Things In Glocco Morra?
I Got The Sun In The Morning
On Top Of Old Smokey
Great Day
If This Isn't Love
That Lucky Old Sun
Louise/Mimi
Don't Let The Stars Get In Your Eyes
Hello, Hello
Moonlight Bay
Cuanto Le Gusta
Lullaby Of Broadway
I Can Dream Can't I
Hand Holdin' Music
The Surrey With The Fringe On Top
May The Good Lord Bless And Keep You
I'd Have Baked A Cake
You Gotta Start Off Each Day With A Song
I Don't Know Why
Till We Meet Again

Playing Time: 51 minutes
Tracks: 23

The 'Radio Years' material was first issued on four USA GNP Crescendo LPs which were subsequently released in the UK. In Australia the four discs were reduced to two LPs and this CD relates to the second Australian issue (volumes 3 and 4 in the UK and USA). This explains why the CD states that it is 'volume 2' although by October 1991 volume 1 had never appeared on CD in Australia. There are two CDs available in the States and these cover all the 'Radio Years' material but in a completely different running order. At the time of writing the USA discs are available through the CCC. Many claim that these two discs are amongst the best of those that feature radio material.

GUEST APPEARANCE —Non-Christmas CDs where Bing is on one or two tracks only.

CD **RAINBOW MFP MFPCD 010 THE ANDREWS SISTERS — RARITIES** Australia £5

Don't Fence Me In (fluffed version)

This disc is identical to the two issues that appeared in the USA on MCA MCAD22012 and MCAD 31036.

CD **AXIS CDAX 701596 THE ANDREWS SISTERS — SING, SING, SING** Australia £7

Yodelin' Jive — Is You Is Or Is You Ain't My Baby

CD **SMS SMS 37 ALL TIME GREATS** UK but found in Australia £5

You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby

CD **ENTERTAINERS CD 0210 HOLLYWOOD COLLECTION** UK £6

I Love You, Samantha

CD **MCA 256594-2 16 ORIGINAL WORLD HITS — HITS OF THE 40's** Australia £5

That's An Irish Lullaby

CD **EMI 3AW 3AW 1278 REMEMBER WHEN** Australia £4

Galway Bay

This record has been released elsewhere in Australia under a different number but the Victorian release was inspired by 'Remember When', a nostalgia programme which featured music from the twenties to the fifties aired every Sunday evening from 6 p.m. till midnight on Radio Melbourne 3AW — 1278. This was during the late 70's. Last year the people everywhere seemed to be listening to a nostalgia programme on for most of the evening, every evening. In Melbourne it seems the young people are abandoning the disco . . . too unsociable . . . it's difficult to talk. Can this be the start of a return to real music?

CD **RHINO R2 71007 GOLDEN THROATS 2 — More Celebrity Rock Oddities** USA ?

Hey Jude

This CD is completely covered with a picture which includes Bing. It is one among several decorated in this way which suggests a new angle to look at when new releases are a bit sparse. This is the second CD featuring unusual celebrity recordings of rock and pop music. Volume 1 has not been seen so it may contain another Bing track.

CD **PARADE PAR 2019 JEROME KERN — A FINE ROMANCE** UK ?£5
3CDs **PARADE PAK 903 TOP HAT, WHITE TIE AND TAILS** UK £10.50

Can I Forget You? — The Folks Who Live On The Hill

Playing Time: 58 minutes — Tracks: 20

The playing time and the number of tracks refer to the single CD which contains the two Bing tracks. In the pack of three CDs there are two which contain no Bing. These relate to 'The Songs Of Irving Berlin' and 'A Trip To The Moon On Gossamer Wings — Cole Porter'. All three CDs mainly feature dance bands of the thirties. Over three hours of music for £10.50 is good value.

2CDs **GOOD MUSIC MSD2-35180/GMD 80041 MAIRZY DOATS — 44 WACKY HITS** USA £14

Pistol Packin' Mama with the Andrews Sisters

Playing Time: 120 minutes — Tracks: 44

The pack released by Parade consists of three individually produced CDs. Here the two discs are a true set and so the time and the number of tracks is for the set which is also available on 3 cassettes or four LPs. The set is described as 'those crazy wonderful songs of the 40's.' It could be much more wackier.

CD **FLAPPER PAST CD 9765 THE GENIUS OF BIX BEIDERBECKE** UK £11

Mississippi Mud (Trumbauer) — There Ain't No Sweet Man (2)
'Tain't So, Honey, 'Tain't So

Playing Time: 68 minutes — Tracks: 22

A pleasant CD mainly for the Bix fans who cannot afford the following set.

9CDs **IRD BIX 1/BIX 9 THE COMPLETE BIX BEIDEBECKE** Italy £116 (Record Centre)
IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

BIX 1 — BIX 3 No Bing
BIX 4 Changes (2 and 3) — Mary (2 and 4)
BIX 5 Ol' Man River — There Ain't No Sweet Man (2 and 3)
Mississippi Mud (Trumbauer) — From Monday On (3, 4 and 6)
Make Believe — Mississippi Mud (41696-2 and 3)

BIX 6 Metropolis (part 3) (2 and 4)
Lovable
BIX 7 Louisiana (1 and 3)
You Took Advantage Of Me
Get Out And Get Under The Moon
'Tain't So, Honey, 'Tain't So
I'd Rather Cry Over You
BIX 8 Louise
I'm In A Seventh Heaven
Reaching For Someone
BIX 9 No Bing

My Pet (1, 2 and 3)
It Was The Dawn Of Love (1, 2 and 3)
That's My Weakness Now
Georgie Porgie
Because My Baby Don't Mean 'Maybe' Now
Out Of Town Gal

Oh! Miss Hannah
Waiting At The End Of The Road
When You're Counting The Stars Alone

Playing Time: 633 minutes/set

Tracks: 210/set

There is much excellent Bing here but this set is really for the Bix specialist. Comparing it with the two LP boxed sets 'Sincerely Bix Beiderbecke Vols 1 and 2', reviewed BING Aug '90, it will be seen that the CD set has 77 fewer tracks and yet 'Ol' Man River', 'Make Believe' and 'Metropolis (4)' are not on the LP set. 'Metropolis' take 2 is listed here which could be the known take 3 alternative. Maybe this set is not complete but all the important Bix is here and some good Bing too.

THE CHRISTMAS GUEST — CDs featuring the occasional track by Bing.

Perhaps the first doesn't really fit into the guest appearance category — but then it depends on which version of the disc you have. There are two very different issues having the same label, release number and almost identical inlay cards. They also share the same bar code but there is yet a third issue with a different bar code but otherwise identical to one of the original two.

CD **LASERLIGHT 15152 IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME** USA Belgium UK £4 to £7

UK/Belgium

White Christmas
Silver Bells
Adeste Fidelis
Silent Night

Tracks: UK/Belgium 17
USA 19

Playing Time: All the discs play about 45 minutes

USA

Silent Night
Jingle Bells
White Christmas
God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
Adeste Fidelis
Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow
I'll Be Home For Christmas
Joy To The World
The First Noel
Silver Bells

The bar code on the USA and the Belgium CD is 0 18111 51522 1 whereas the disc found in the UK carries the number 4 006408 151524. All the discs carry USA and German addresses but the USA disc definitely states 'MADE IN U.S.A.' and the German city is given as 'Cologne' whereas both EEC discs show Köln. Nat King Cole and Frank Sinatra are also featured on these CDs and the USA disc which is far more interesting to Bing collectors, can be identified by the front inlay card which has the names 'Bing' and 'Sinatra' underlined in yellow. The EEC discs have green lines under these two names otherwise the inlay cards are all identical. Time hasn't allowed a complete track comparison but the songs common to both seem to be different versions and if comparison is made with the CD 'White Christmas' (15444) there is yet another version of the title song. Other titles may be identical. These CDs are great value for money, the sound is good, the versions are unusual and it is a mystery as to why different issues should carry the same number, etc.

The following Christmas discs seem to have little to offer the Bing collector and so they are mentioned here briefly for the sake of completeness.

CD **CURB D2-77515 CHRISTMAS ALL-TIME GREATEST RECORDS — Vol 2** USA

Silver Bells

CD **CAPITOL CDP 7 97459-2 MERRY CHRISTMAS BABY** USA

Frosty The Snowman

CD **PMF 90527-2 MERRY CHRISTMAS — ALL TIME CHRISTMAS HITS** Holland

White Christmas

Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer

CD **CeDe INTERNATIONAL CD66099 CHRISTMAS WITH THE STARS** EEC

Adeste Fidelis

2CDs **ARCADE 94820-2 CHRISTMAS LOVE SONGS** UK

Santa Claus Is Coming To Town

Silent Night

CHRISTMAS 'CRACKERS' — THE PRIME CUTS OF CHRISTMAS that missed the December BING

CD **LASERLIGHT 15444 WHITE CHRISTMAS** UK £4

The Christmas Song

White Christmas

Jingle Bells
Silent Night
Happy Holiday/Come To Holiday Inn
Let's Start The New Year Right
God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow
I'll Be Home For Christmas
Adeste Fidelis

Joy To The World
The First Noel
Good King Wenceslas
Away In A Manger
Deck The Halls
O Little Town Of Bethlehem
Silver Bells

Playing Time: 40 minutes

Tracks: 17

The comments here are based on only a brief listening. These tracks appear to come from the Kraft Music Hall radio series. The sound is excellent with Bing in great voice. It certainly deserves a better review but at four pounds you can buy the disc and enjoy doing your own. It is doubtful whether much of this Christmas cheer has been issued previously.

CD **TELSTAR TCD 2468 CHRISTMAS WITH BING CROSBY** UK £12.50

White Christmas
Sleigh Ride
Silver Bells
The Snowman
Sleigh Bell Serenade
I'll Be Home For Christmas
Here Comes Santa Claus
You're All I Want For Christmas
Santa Claus Is Coming To Town
Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer

Peace On Earth/Little Drummer Boy ‡‡‡‡
Silent Night
The First Noel
Faith Of Our Fathers
God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
The Twelve Days Of Christmas
It's Beginning To Look Like Christmas
I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day
The Christmas Song
Jingle Bells

Playing Time: 56 minutes

Tracks: 20 ‡‡‡‡ with David Bowie

A pleasant enough collections of the old favourites improved here by the addition for the very first time on CD, of 'Peace On Earth/Little Drummer Boy' — the duet version with David Bowie that was recorded for TV just before Bing's death in 1977.

CD **WORLD STAR COLLECTION WSC 99055 WHITE CHRISTMAS** Australia £5

There is a multiplicity of CDs issued variously under the title of 'Merry Christmas' or 'White Christmas' all of which contain the same twelve titles. This particular issue excels as, in common with Lotus CD 50001, also called 'White Christmas', it features the two extra tracks recently endowed with mistletoe and holly, 'That's An Irish Lullaby' and 'Galway Bay'. Don't forget your shamrock next Christmas! Interestingly, this CD shows the name SPA on the label (not on the WSC 'High Society' label). Does this indicate that CeDe, associated with WSC through 'High Society' and Spa all belong to the Spartan Record Co. The Lotus label and Entertainers are part of the Italian/French Joker Tonverlag group.

CD **MCA DMCAT 111 BING CROSBY — WHITE CHRISTMAS** UK £4.50

White Christmas
God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
Silent Night

Playing Time: 8 minutes

Tracks: 3

This is featured in the April edition of BING but it is doubtful whether you are reading this on the first, so rest assured that this is no joke! It is, of course a five inch CD that is equivalent to a seven inch 45 rpm disc and, if the 'old' grey matter still functions properly, some 45 rpm copies of 'White Christmas' were issued with 111 as the release number. Previously 3 inch CDs have been issued one with two, and the other with four Christmas numbers. There seems little reason for this short play disc as the cost in producing it must approach that of a CD that is reasonably full. For your money you don't even get the usual plastic case — just a cardboard sleeve like a mini LP. The sleeve carries the full title shown above. On the disc it has 'Bing Crosby' at the top of the disc with the three song titles shown on the lower part of the disc. A cassette is also available. As with the CD it has no case — just a cardboard sleeve around four sides of the cassette leaving the two ends open. For £2.50 you get just TWO tracks. 'Silent Night' has been omitted (but then this is only just over half the price of the CD!). Value for money — you get the same two titles on both sides of the cassette! The cassette plays for 5 minutes 20 seconds. Does anyone know of a commercially released cassette that plays for less time than this? Since both the cassette and the CD contain only Bing tracks they are included as 'prime cuts of Christmas' but surely 'Christmas crackers' takes on a whole new meaning!

'COLLECTIVE' FRIENDSHIP

The musical pleasures from collecting records is obvious but over the last few years it has become very apparent that it goes much deeper than that. A small inheritance allowed this writer to consider the possibility of a life-long ambition to visit both the United States of America and also Australia. Both ambitions have been fulfilled over the last two years and thanks to the encouragement and hospitality of Crosby collectors it has been possible to see and do far more than modest means would otherwise have allowed. Many treasured records came from overseas but it is now known that the greatest treasure of all is the friendship that came with the records. Club work left little time to thank everyone individually so please accept a very sincere thanks now.

Derek Parkes

CROSBY CLUBS AROUND THE WORLD

The ICC is pleased to be associated with the following Crosby Clubs.

Please write to the appropriate address for details of membership

Club Crosby, "BINGANG"
Mark Scrimger, President
Wayne L. Martin, Editor
P.O. Box 3849
Kirkwood
Missouri 63122, USA

(Members in Europe should enrol via Ken Crossland)

THE QUEENSLAND BING CROSBY SOCIETY
17 Thurecht Parade
Scarborough
Queensland
Australia

THE BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Quentin Reinhart, President
P.O. Box 216
Tacoma
Washington 98401, USA

BINGTHINGS SOCIETY
Bob Lundberg, President
5021 57th Avenue Court West
Tacoma
Washington 98467-4802, USA

BING'S FRIENDS AND COLLECTORS SOCIETY
Hobie and Cathie Wilson, Pres/Tres.
236 Andrieux Street
Sonoma
California 95476-6909, USA

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SOME IMPORTANT ADDRESSES

As suggested by Trevor Wagstaff in the letter pages, we are giving several important address for use by members when writing to request Bing features etc. This information has been supplied by Stan White and we should be happy to publish other addresses which members feel may be useful if details could be supplied.

Channel Four Television
60 Charlotte Street
London W1P 2AX

British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
London
W1A 1AA

BBC Radio Cambridgeshire
Broadcasting House
104 Hills Road
Cambridge, CB2 1LD
(0223 315970)

KCBC Radio
PO Box1530
Kettering
Northamptonshire
NE16 8PU

MCA Records
70 Universal City Plaza
Universal City
California 91608
USA

The Film Syndicate
7214 Melrose Avenue
Los Angeles,
California 90046
U.S.A.

Radio Telefis Eireann, (radio and television)
Donnybrook
Dublin 4
Eire

BBC Radio Northampton
Abington Street
Northampton
NN1 2BE

Embassy of The United States of America
24 Grosvenor Square
London
W1A 2LH
(071 499 9000)

Copy date for next time — 15 June. See you then.

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| From the top of your head

02083 | Two for to-night
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